UNIVERSAL HISTORY.

RUSSIA.

CHAP. I.

Description of Russia.

THE extensive empire of Russia is bounded on the east by Asia; on the west by the Neiper, the gulf of Riga, and Finland, Sweden and Swedish Lapland; on the north by the Frozen Ocean; and on the south by the Don and a line drawn from the Neiper to the mouth of the Don. It extends from 47 to 72 degrees of north latitude, and from 23 to 65 of eastern longitude; and is about one thousand five hundred miles in length, and eleven hundred in breadth. These are the ancient and proper limits of Russia; but by means of conquest and discovery an immense extent of territory has been added to this empire; insomuch that when it is mid-day in the western, it is almost mid-night in the eastern parts. In fact, this great northern monarchy infinitely exceeds the limits of the largest and most celebrated empires of antiquity, even when in the zenith of their power and glory.

In this extensive country, the soil and climate are extremely various; corn seldom arrives at maturity beyond sixty degrees of latitude.

scarcely any species of fruit is produced beyond seventy; but in the middle provinces of the empire, the soil is fruitful, the woods abound with game, the plains are stocked with cattle, and the rivers teem with a variety of excellent fish. In the more southern parts the climate is hot; and where the soil is of a sufficient depth, flowers and fruits arrive at great perfection, the earth is covered with verdure, and nature indicates a happy and pleasing fertility. In the more northern districts, the cold in winter is intolerably severe, and the days are short; but in summer, the weather is proportionably warm, and the days are pleasant. During the winter season, in the latitude of Archangel, the sun rises about half past ten in the morning, and sets at half past one in the afternoon; at Petersburgh, the capital of the empire, he rises about a quarter before ten, and sets about a quarter after two. In summer, this order is entirely reversed; and at the solstice, in these respective latitudes, the length of the shortest day becomes the length of the night, and the length of the longest night the length of the day. Under the same parallels of latitude, the eastern countries are more intensely cold in winter, and hot in summer, than the western. Vegetation is also more quick, and fruits sooner arrive at perfection; but after three or four months, which constitute the summer, the icy hand of winter is again visible, the lingering verdure of the ground is destroyed, the rivers are chained to their beds, and only a wide continuous landscape of snow can be seen. During this dreary season of the year, when the stars, the twilight, or the aurora-borealis, supply the place of the short-lived day, many are frozen

frozen to death by the extremity of the cold. The Russians, however, by means of sledges, travel with so much expedition upon the snow, that the beef of Archangel is frequently eaten at Petersburgh, though these cities are distant at least one thousand miles from each other.

Notwithstanding the encouragement which was given to agriculture by the late empress Catharine the second, that science is still imperfectly understood in most parts of Russia: extensive tracts of territory lie waste and neglected, and the general population of the country is by no means proportionate to its limits. The number of the inhabitants of this empire, exclusive of the conquered and annexed provinces, has been calculated to amount to twenty-five millions; but as all accounts of this kind are vague, arbitrary, and uncertain, we shall not hazard an opinion on the subject. Nothing, however, is more evident than that the foreign wars which have extended the limits of the empire, and the grand projects which have aggrandized the names of some of its sovereigns, have been unfavourable to population; and it will probably be several centuries before Russia is as well peopled as the more southern parts of Europe.

The Wolga, which is the principal river in this empire, and one of the largest in the world, rises in the forest of Wolcanski, and after a course of more than two thousand miles, empties itself into the Caspian sea. Large ships are navigated up this river as far as Iwer, a town not more than forty miles from its source; and the Wolga is sometimes so swelled by the melting of ice and snow, as to occasion dreadful inundations and many fatal disasters. It is, however,

extremely beneficial to the country through which it flows, fertilizes the soil, and in all its long and circuitous course has not a single cataract or obstruction to navigation. The city of Moscow, by means of this river, preserves a communication, not only with the southern parts of Russia, but also with Persia, Georgia, Tartary, and the several countries which border on the Caspian sea.

The next river that claims our attention is the Don, or Tanais, which rising near Tula in the Iwana Ossero, or St. John's lake, divides Europe from Asia, and runs from north to south till its conflux with the Sosna; it then pursues an eastern course, and after many windings resumes its first direction, and falls into the sea of Asoph. The distance between this river and the Wolga is in some places not more than eight English miles, and Peter the third undertook to form a communication between them; but an irruption of the Tartars defeated this noble project, which was never afterwards resumed.

The Neiper, or Boristhenes, is also a considerable river, which rises in the forest of Wolkonski, forms several windings through Lithuania, Little Russia, the country of the Zaporo Cossacs, and that of the Nagaian Tartars, and at last discharges its waters into the Euxine or Black sea, near Oczakow. Within the space of sixty wersts, this river contains no less than thirteen water-falls; over which, however, in the spring season, when the floods are out, vessels may be navigated.

Besides these capital rivers, this empire contains many others of less importance; and most of them abound with a variety of fish, render the

the soil fertile and agreeable, open a communication between the most distant provinces, and when commerce shall be properly understood, will be equally the source of wealth, elegance, and convenience.

In the province of Ingria stands the city of Petersburgh, one of the capitals of the Russian empire, and at present the imperial residence, whose scite was only occupied by two fishing huts till the year 1703, when Peter the Great having conquered the adjoining territory, was induced by the commodious situation of this spot for the Baltic trade, to build a town and fortress. This design he carried into immediate execution. His original intention, however, was only to make it a depôt for arms, and a place where all kinds of military stores might be conveniently collected from the interior parts of the empire; in consequence of which, the public and private edifices were only built of timber, and the town had no other defence than a rampart of earth. But the czar having obtained the decisive victory at Paltowa, and conquered all Livonia, was inspired with more sublime ideas. In order, therefore, to gratify a disposition that only gloried in surmounting difficulties, which would have been insuperable to any other man, Peter determined to make this the capital of his empire, and, by conferring his name on the intended city, to perpetuate the memory of himself. For that purpose, he ordered the castle to be built of stone, the admiralty to be circumscribed with a wall, and all the other edifices to be erected in a neat and handsome manner, and of durable materials. His successors amply executed the designs of the founder, and finished

what the death of Peter had left imperfect. Petersburgh, which is situated in 59 degrees and 57 minutes of north latitude, and in 31 degrees of east longitude from London, is now reckoned one of the largest and most elegant cities in Europe. It is about six miles in length, and as many in breadth; but has neither walls, nor gates. This city is said to contain upwards of nine thousand houses, seven hundred of which are built of stone, twenty Russian churches, besides religious edifices of almost every other nation in Europe; and a great number of magnificent palaces. It would be impossible to particularize all the various branches of manufacture and articles of commerce in this flourishing capital. Suffice it, therefore, to say, that it is the mart for purchasing all the commodities of Russia, and that there is here a ready and constant demand for such goods as are wanted in any part of the empire. Besides the school for cadets, this city also contains an academy of sciences and the polite arts, courts of justice, and, in short, every object which can add to its consequence or embellishment.

Moscow, which was formerly the capital of the Russian empire, and for many ages the residence of its sovereigns, is distant about one thousand four hundred and fourteen miles north-east from London. It is built after the eastern manner, has few regular streets, and is supposed to contain sixteen hundred edifices dedicated to religious purposes. The public buildings are very superb. The population of this city has been variously estimated: certain, however, it is that Moscow has greatly declined in consequence,

quence, since the seat of government was removed to Petersburgh.

About eight leagues from Petersburgh stands Cronstadt, which possesses three large, safe and commodious harbours, in the principal of which is moored the greatest part of the Russian fleets. Some of these, within our remembrance, have been seen to traverse the ocean, cross the Mediterranean, and spread terror and dismay on the banks of the Dardanelles.

The Russians are divided into three classes: the nobles, or gentry who bear titles, and are denominated *knezes;* the gentry without titles, who are called *duornins,* and are all bound to military service; and the peasants. The traders and artisans, who reside in towns, do not constitute a separate class, but are comprehended in the others.

The rest of the inhabitants consider the peasantry as a sort of cattle attached to the soil, which they cultivate for the benefit of the other orders. They are sold and bartered away, as a piece of merchandise or other commodity. Possessing no property of their own, except a few paltry houshold utensils in their wretched huts, they are absolute slaves, and their number constitutes the wealth of their masters, who own the soil to which they are annexed. Happy would the Russian peasant consider himself, were he allowed to enter into the army, and to fight the battles of his sovereign—a privilege which is not always granted him. The laborious life by which those unfortunates are inured to toil, their passive obedience, the privations to which they are habituated, and their indifference for an existence which is barren of every enjoy-

enjoyment, all conspire to render them hardy warriors and brave soldiers.

Before the reign of Peter the Great, the Russians were scarcely ranked among the civilized nations of Europe; but that prince, by a happy temperature of mildness and severity, induced wonderful and laudable changes in the manners of the people. The vulgar, however, are still excessively attached to ancient institutions; and many chuse rather to submit to the payment of additional taxes, than to conform to certain regulations which the government has thought proper to adopt for their improvement. In the number of these peculiarities may be reckoned their unwillingness to cut their beards, which is greatly opposed by the lower class of the people. Considering a ruddy complexion as the very essence of beauty, the Russian women are extremely addicted to the use of rouge, and the poor frequently beg money with which to buy paint.

The dress of the common people is excessively mean: they are generally clothed with long coats made of sheep skins dressed, with the hair turned inwards; and their legs and feet are swaddled with coarse cloth, secured by cords composed of reeds, and with sandals formed of the same cheap materials. They cover their heads with caps lined with furs, and secure their hands from the cold by double gloves. Those of a higher rank, however, imitate the English in their dress. The Russians commonly bathe twice every week, and as soon as they have left the warm water, they frequently sally out naked, and roll themselves in the snow; considering

dering the vicissitudes of cold and heat as invigorating to the constitution.

Notwithstanding the narrow circumstances of the common people, and the abstemiousness enjoined by their religion, they are extravagantly fond of spirituous and other strong liquors. The severity of the climate, indeed, may serve in some measure as an apology for them in this particular. We are told by some writers, that even the ladies are so far from being ashamed of indulging themselves to excess in this odious and detestable vice, that they will frankly acknowledge their inebriety, and return thanks to their friends for having made them drunk.

In this country, people travel with cheapness and expedition. In summer, they generally employ post-horses; but in winter, when the snow is become sufficiently hard, persons of rank usually travel in sledges drawn by rein-deer, which are excellently calculated for expedition. But in the internal parts of this empire, the sledges are generally drawn by horses; and about the month of February, the tract becomes so beaten, that a journey between Petersburgh and Moscow, which is a distance of four hundred miles, can be accomplished with ease in three days and three nights.

The Sclavonian language forms the basis of the Russian; but the latter is enriched with many words from the Greek tongue. Forty-two characters, which are principally Grecian, constitute the alphabet; but as it did not express every particular sound, recourse was had to the Hebrew language, and some arbitrary signs were also invented.

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The religion established in Russia is that of the Greek church, the externals of which consist in the number and severity of its fasts, that far exceed those of the church of Rome. The Russians deny the supremacy of the Pope, and disclaim the worship of graven images; but, nevertheless, in their private devotions, kneel before a picture of the virgin Mary, or of some particular saint, whom they consider as a mediator and friend. Pictured saints abound in all their churches; and they retain many absurd, superstitious, and idolatrous customs in performing the public ceremonies of their religion: when they pass a church, they bow and prostrate themselves at the entrance, and if conscious of having contracted any difilement or impurity, forbear to enter the consecrated edifice. The generality of the people know little of the contents of the Bible; nor are the youth instructed in the principles of religion and morality. The whole service of the church consists in abundance of ceremonies, prayers, masses, and singing.

The titles of the czar, or emperor of Russia, are very pompous and sounding, and specify every particular province and country of which he is sovereign. This monarchy is absolute, despotic, and hereditary; but the succession is after a peculiar manner, and sometimes depends on the pleasure of the reigning prince, and at other times on the senate and nobles, who constitute themselves arbiters in the matter, and confirm or abrogate the will of their deceased monarch. The senate, which is composed of the most respectable members of the empire, forms, indeed, a part of the constitution, and still

still subsists; but though the sovereign treats them with the greatest personal regard and deference, and the weightiest and most important affairs are submitted to their deliberation and decision, they seldom venture to dissent from the will, or to prescribe contrary to the known inclinations of the prince.

The court of Russia was always remarkable for numbers and magnificence; but its ancient grandeur, compared with its present greatness, is trifling and insignificant: it is constantly filled with men of the greatest opulence and abilities in the empire, who are obliged by titles of honour and distinction to pay a regular attendance, without being allowed any salary. The late sovereigns, however, have commuted the ancient titles of nobility for those honours and distinctions which are common to the rest of Europe; and this change is intended to prevent the revival of those ideas of power, to which their original quality entitled them.

Different persons have made different estimations of the revenues of this immense empire: some calculating them at sixty millions of rubles, and others at only twenty millions. It is, however, certain, that though they greatly exceed what they were formerly, they bear no proportion to the extent of the Russian territories. The principal revenues arise from the annual capitation tax, which is estimated at five millions of rubles; from the demesne lands, which are occupied by near four hundred thousand peasants; and from inns and public houses, tolls and customs by sea and land, salt-works, stamp-duties, law-suits, abbey-lands, and caravans, with many other inferior particulars.

It is supposed that the regular standing army of Russia consists of two hundred and fifty thousand men, exclusive of an infinite number of troops which may be raised on any emergency. The navy has become very respectable; and the officers and seamen frequently display a considerable share of skill and bravery. Many British officers, indeed, have enjoyed principal commands in the fleets of Russia, and have introduced their native discipline, which is equally the object of admiration as of terror to the rest of Europe.

The common punishments in this country are the batfogen, katze, and knoute. The former of these inflictions consists in stripping the culprit to the shirt, and laying him on the ground on his belly, when one man being placed on his neck, and another on his feet, they beat him on the back with small wands during the appointed time. The katze, which was originally inflicted on those who, in violation and contempt of a public prohibition, ventured to take snuff, is performed by slitting the nostrils. The knoute, however, is the most common punishment in Russia, and may properly be considered as the most barbarous and dreadful infliction that can possibly be imagined on this side of death. The culprit being stripped to the waist, and having his feet tied together, the executioner is provided with a bull's pizzle, to which are fastened three thongs of an elk's skin, and standing at a convenient distance, draws blood at every stroke. The flesh is usually stripped off the bones, and the vitals are exposed; and many die in the hands of the executioner.

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To particularize the various nations, which inhabit the territories of this immense empire, would far exceed the limits of a general work; but we shall select such as seem entitled to peculiar attention.

The ancients were not unacquainted with the Laplanders, whom they called Pygmies and Troglodytes: by the former appellation, they denoted the shortness of their stature, which rarely reaches to, and never exceeds the height of four feet; by the latter, they designated their custom of living in subterraneous caves, which they dig for their habitations. The hands and feet of this people are remarkably small, and seem peculiarly formed for clambering up the sides of rocks and mountains, with which Lapland is covered. Naturally attached to their native soil, they conceive it impossible for them to live in any other part of the world. They possess few ideas; are subject to no particular disease; and drink nothing but water in that frozen clime. Unacquainted with the distinctions of private property, they have wives in common. Their religion is devested of any established system of belief, and consists entirely in ceremonial worship.

The Samoieds inhabit the shores of the frozen ocean, and extend to parts which have hitherto eluded the examination of the curious traveller. These people, who greatly resemble the Laplanders in stature, differ from them in many particulars: their cheeks are jutting and bloated, their eyes long and almost shut, their complexion is tawny, and the bosoms of the women are black. The Russians have endeavoured to impart to them some knowledge of Christianity; but the

Samoieds rank Jesus Christ only in the number of their gods. They allow a plurality of wives. When their parents are grown old and infirm, they drown, or otherwise destroy them, in order to relieve them from the miseries and calamities of life.

The Cossacs, who are a tall, well proportioned, vigorous, courageous race of men, inured to fatigue, fickle, lively, and full of vivacity, are mentioned in history at an early period, when they inhabited mount Caucasus, and were subjected to the Russians in 1021. About the commencement of the sixteenth century, the Zaporog Cossacs removed their habitations to the fertile and spacious plains, which stretch along the banks of the Neiper. Foreseeing the advantages which would arise from defending this people against the incursions of the Tartars, the Poles took them under their protection, and resigned to them the entire possession of all the country which lies between the rivers Neiper and Neisters and the Tartarian frontiers. Thus protected, they became populous, kept the Turks under perpetual alarms by their incursions, and seized on the islands of the Neiper, which they fortified. Notwithstanding the reciprocal advantages which were the fruits of this union, a friendship did not long subsist between the Poles and Cossacs. The former envying the latter the possession of the fertile country which they inhabited, endeavoured to bring them under subjection. The Cossacs, however, fired with honest indignation, had recourse to arms, and applying to the Russians and Turks for assistance, a cruel and bloody war ensued, which was at length terminated by the czar of Russia granting

granting to the Cossacs protection and assistance. Their former fertile country being desolated and laid waste by the long continuance of the war, they settled in the Russian Ukraine, preserved their ancient constitution, and were exempted from the payment of all taxes. To compensate in some measure for these immunities, they stipulated to maintain at their own expence a considerable body of troops for the service of Russia. But in 1708, Mazeppa, the hettman, or chief of the Cossacs, infringed this treaty, and joined Charles the twelfth of Sweden. Peter the first, who at that time possessed the throne of Russia, in order to prevent such revolts for the future, sent a strong detachment into the little islands of the Nieper, whither the Cossacs had fled with their families and effects, inhumanly commanded them to be put to death, and their property to be divided among his soldiers. Exclusive of the massacre committed by the czar's troops, he caused a great number of Cossacs to be transported to the Baltic, where they endured the most unmerited sufferings. Peter, however, did not succeed in extirpating that warlike nation. The office of hettman was abolished in 1722, but restored in 1750, when the empress Elizabeth confirmed the election of one of her privy-counsellors to that dignity. The internal government of this people seems to approximate the nearest to that of the ancient Germans. The captains and officers of the nation elect a chief, who holds his office during life, and is considered as a superior over the other towns, each of which is formed into a separate commonwealth, and governed by an officer chosen annually. The Cossacs are divid-

ed, into many tribes, but their manners and customs bear a strong affinity to one another; and their principal distinction seems to be the effect of local and accidental causes.

The czar possesses a part of Circassia, which is situated in Asiatic Russia, or Russian Tartary. The females here are celebrated for their beauty, and called the "French Tartar women," on account of their great fondness of fashions. The men also dress in a tasteful manner. They practice circumcision, which is the only part of Mahometanism they observe, and with it they mingle certain ceremonies of Paganism and Christianity.

The Tartars are a people who inhabit a vast extent of territory in the Russian empire. They are in general disagreeable in their persons, but strong and very robust. So numerous are the tribes into which they are divided, that the bare nomenclature of them would be a difficult study to commit to memory. They are scattered over the plains, which they inhabit in preference to any other part, and consider towns and cities as places of confinement. It is not, therefore, to be wondered at, that no country in the world contains fewer towns than Russian Tartary. It possesses, however, heaps of ruins, which sufficiently demonstrate that it has not always been thus bare of cities, and which must be the remains of cities of considerable magnitude. In some sepulchres, which stand near to them, the curious have found Grecian, Syrian, Arabian, and Roman coins.

In Siberia, which is an immense country, or rather frightful desert, whither the Russians are exiled, similar vestiges of habitations may be observed.

observed. The Huns, who overturned the Roman empire, and who had originally emigrated from the north of China, issued from these forests. To them succeeded the Tartars, called Usbecks, who, in their turn, were dispossessed by the Russians. It is thus that for ages men have continued to murder each other, in fighting for one of the most uninviting countries upon earth. The cold is here of long duration, and so intense that people have often been frozen to death on horseback. In this country all kinds of minerals are to be met with; and Siberia furnishes fossile bones, which are the reliques either of very large elephants whose existence must appear very extraordinary in so cold a climate, or of a species of animal which is now totally extinct. Whether of these opinions ought to be adopted naturalists are not agreed. The scattered hordes, or tribes, who inhabit this country have not adopted the same manners, but each has its own peculiar customs, government, and religion, if deserving that appellation. Siberia was not subjected to the Russians by gentle means. Ivan the Great caused in one day seven hundred of the inhabitants of a small town, called Tara, to be impaled alive, in order to deter others from conspiring against him. Near to that unfortunate town grows a species of henbane, which, being infused in liquor, produces a very extraordinary effect on those who drink it: the most minute things become great in their eyes; a straw is magnified into a beam, a few drops of water seem a lake, and the smallest hole appears a precipice. Possessed of so excellent a preservative, it is much to be regretted that the ill-fated inhabitants did not send to

the czar a few casks of wine duly impregnated with it.

CHAP. II.

From the Accession of Ruric to the Extinction of his Family.

NOTWITHSTANDING all researches into antiquity, the Russians may be considered in the same light as those ancient families, who are ignorant of their origin and descent, and are scarcely acquainted with the names of those who first began to raise them to celebrity and repute. In fact, it would be an extremely difficult task to prove whether their progenitors were Scythians, Huns, Cimbri, Getæ, Sarmatæ, or other ancient inhabitants of those countries, which are now comprehended within the dominions of the czar. It is not till the middle of the fifteenth century, that we can discover in those extensive tracts of territory other inhabitants than hordes of savages, who advancing, retreating, combating, expelling, expelled, and returning, were at length united under the command of a more enterprizing and successful chieftain, who formed them into a corporate nation. On the death of this leader, the collected tribes were divided among his children, who renew the former confusion. After some time arises another chief, who resumes the empire, which he again loses or dismembers among his family. In this manner, Russia was incessantly exposed to the fatal vicissitudes of sovereigns and intestine wars, and being oppressed by the bloody contests of those discordant

cordant princes, frequently became an easy prey to the Poles and Tartars.

We shall, however, retrace the sovereigns of this country as far back as the most authentic accounts of Russia extend.—In the ninth century, the Scandinavians, who were Danes, Normans or Norwegians, and Swedes, emigrated from the north, and crossing the Baltic, settled in this country. They first subdued the inhabitants of Courland, Livonia, and Esthonia; and, extending their conquests, exacted tributes from the natives of Novogorod. These intruders were denominated Waregers, from which the name Russes or Russians, is said to derive its origin. This country being broken into several petty states, which were continually at war with each other, the most horrid rapine, cruelty, and devestations were frequently committed. Gostomisel, therefore, a principal person among the Novogoradians, by whom he was highly revered for his prudence and understanding, pitying the wretched condition of his countrymen, advised them to apply to their potent neighbours the Waregers, and to offer them the government. This proposal was readily accepted, and three princes of known abilities and valour, whose names were Ruric, Sineus, and Truwor, who are said to have been brothers, were deputed to the office. They reigned very amicably, and made considerable additions to their respective territories, all of which at length devolved to Ruric, by the death of Sineus and Truwor, who left no issue.

On the demise of Ruric, he left his dominions to his son Igor, a minor, whom he committed to the care of a relation A. D. 878.

named

named Olech, that governed with great integrity during the non-age of the young prince, and enlarged his territories by the conquest of several towns and districts. He also undertook an expedition against Constantinople, which he besieged for some time, and at length compelled the emperor to purchase peace at a stipulated price. Olech governed the dominions, of which he was only regent, thirty-three years. On the death of Olech, Igor regardless of the treaty which had been before concluded, set sail for Constantinople. His sole aim, and that of the troops who composed his army, was to plunder and destroy wherever they came. He ravaged Paphlagonia, Pontus, and Bythinia; and the troops of the empire being at a distance, the want of resistance and opposition increased the force and impetuosity of his rage. The cruelties inflicted on the wretched inhabitants were dreadful and incredible. At length, however, the Grecian armies assembled and attacked them on all sides; and the Russians atoned with their blood for the blood of their victims; and Igor returned to his dominions with scarcely one-third of his forces. This prince afterwards ravaged and desolated the country of the Drevlians, who were already tributary to him, and who, being rendered desperate by repeated outrages, slew him. This murder was dreadfully avenged on the whole nation, by Olga, the widow of Igor. She afterwards went to Constantinople, where she was baptized, and received the name of Helen; and many of her subjects were converted to Christianity.

Swetoslaw, the son of Igor and Olga, was a great warrior, and enlarged his dominions by the

the acquisition of much territory; but embarking in an expedition against the Greeks, at the head of a numerous army, he was defeated, and obliged to seek refuge among the Petchenegans, whose prince basely murdered him, and used his skull as a goblet, on which was inscribed the following sentence: "In seeking the property of others, thine own was lost."

Wolodimir I. inherited the valour of his father, and having obtained possession of a vast dominion, by the death of his brothers, awed the neighbouring princes, composed faction, extended the boundaries of his territories, and, through the terror of his arms, procured for his subjects the blessings of peace. This prince married the sister of the Greek emperor, Basilius Porphyrogenitus, and embraced Christianity. Previously to his conversion to the religion of Jesus, he had five wives, and eight hundred concubines*. Forgetting the fate of his own brothers, he imprudently divided his dominions among his twelve sons, who became enemies to each other, and after his death, replunged their country into all the horrors of murders, massacres, and civil wars. A. D. 976.

Jaroslaw, who had been appointed to the government of Novogorod, assembled his forces, and attacking his brothers, dispossessed them of their dominions, which he usurped. Encouraged by some success which he gained over the Cossacs, he ventured to carry on war against the Poles, but was obliged to A. D. 1019.

* From this circumstance he received the name of Solomon.

yield

yield to the superior valour of the king of Poland, and to the discipline of experienced troops. The conqueror, however, contented himself with imposing an annual tribute upon Russia, and confirmed Jaroslaw in his possessions. This prince also divided his dominions among his five sons, whom he named his successors. The horrors of civil war were soon renewed under princes equally ambitious, and able to injure each other. None of the parties was so weak as to be obliged to submit, nor so powerful as to command respect.

Persecuted by his brethren and relations, Jzaslow, the eldest son of the late prince, was compelled to abandon, in 1067, the throne which had been left him by his father. By the assistance of the Poles, however, he obtained possession of his dominions in 1068; but was expelled a second time in 1075. The Poles again reinstated him in 1077. From this period, the history of the Russian empire consists for some time of one continued series of wars which the several princes waged against each other.

A. D. 1106. At length, Wolodimir II. nephew to Jzaslow, being more fortunate, and more enterprising than the rest, possessed himself of the greatest part of these territories, and caused himself to be declared universal monarch. He transferred the whole of his power to his son Wsewold II. who plunged the state into fresh disorder, by dividing his dominions among his children, that formed separate and independent governments, and were continually employed in destroying each other. These rival princes renewed the dreadful scenes of treachery,

treachery, assassination, domestic animosity, and fratricide. The Tartars availed themselves of these dissentions, and made incursions into Russia, which they plundered and desolated.

The principalities of Wolodimir, Halitz, and Kiow, though considerable when united, were not able separately to resist the frequent inroads of the Poles, who over-ran and pillaged the country. Hostilities, however, continued with great violence between Russia and Poland, during the reigns of Boleslaus III. and Casimir II. The death of Wladimir, nephew to the Polish king, and who had obtained some dominions in Russia, occasioned fresh feuds and contentions. A. D. 1182.

The Russians were now reduced to a most deplorable condition. They were perpetually distressed by their sovereigns, harassed by their neighbours, and exposed to all the calamities of war; when to complete their misery, the Tartars attacked them with irresistible fury, and made an entire conquest of their country. History does not inform us of the particulars of this remarkable event; but we are told that innumerable multitudes of those barbarians, commanded by their khan Batto, or Battus, having ravaged a great part of Poland and Silesia, made a sudden inroad into Russia, which they desolated, and in which they committed every act of cruelty that could possibly be suggested. Most of the Russian princes, including the great-duke George Sevoloditz, were made prisoners and put to death; and none found mercy, but those who voluntarily acknowledged the Tartars as their lords and sovereigns. A. D. 1237.

George

George Sevoloditz was succeeded by his brother Michael Sevoloditz Zernigouski, who opposed those barbarous enemies of his country, but was defeated by them, and lost his life. He left three sons, whose wars with each other proved fatal to them all. The son and grandson of one of these princes were successively advanced to the throne of Russia by the Tartars; and the latter, whose name was Daniel Alexandrowitz, removed his court from Wolodimir to Moscow, where he assumed the title of Great Duke of Wolodimir and Moscow. He left two sons, Gregory and John, the former of whom obtained the sovereignty, but was soon afterwards assassinated by Demetri Michaelowitz, who was put to death by the Tartars for this action, and the brother of the murdered prince ascended the throne. John left three sons, John, Simon, and Andrew; and the eldest of them, commonly called Iwan Iwanowitz, was created sovereign by the approbation of the Tartars, on whom he was dependent.

During these several reigns, which occupy a space of more than one hundred years, and which all historians have slightly passed over for want of authentic records, the miseries of a foreign yoke were aggravated by the calamities of intestine discord and civil war. The Poles and Livonians seizing this opportunity, attacked Russia, and made themselves masters of much territory and several towns. The Russians and Tartars united their forces, and assembled an army sufficiently numerous to subjugate Poland, but which was destitute of valour and discipline. Casimir, undaunted by this multitude of barbarians, presented himself at the head of a few troops

troops on the borders of the Vistula, and obliged his enemies to retire. A. D. 1340.

Demetrius Iwanowitz, son of Iwan Iwanowitz, who commanded in Moscow, made frequent efforts to rid himself of the galling yoke of the Tartars. He defeated Mamay their khan in many engagements, and, when conqueror, refused to pay them any tribute, and assumed the title of Great Duke of Muscovy. But these oppressors of the north returning in greater numbers than before, Demetrius was at length overpowered, and perished with his whole army, which is said to have amounted to upwards of two hundred and forty thousand men.

Basilius Demetriwitz revenged the death of his father. He attacked his enemies, expelled them his dominions, and conquered Bulgaria. Equally brave and politic, he concluded an alliance with the Poles, to whom he ceded a part of his territories, on condition of their assisting him in defending the rest against the incursions of the Tartars. This treaty, however, was a weak barrier against ambition; and the Russians found enemies in their new allies. Basilius Demetriwitz had a son called after himself, to whom the sovereignty ought naturally to have descended; but the father suspecting his legitimacy, left it to his brother Gregory, a man of a severe and tyrannical disposition, who was hated by the people. The Russians, however, asserted the right of the son, and proclaimed him their sovereign; and the Tartars taking cognizance of the dispute, determined also in favour of Basilius. Gregory, therefore, had recourse to arms, drove his nephew from Moscow, and forcibly usurped the government, of which he kept pos-

session. On his death, Basilius returned to Moscow; but Andrew and Demetrius, the sons of Gregory, having taken him prisoner, put out his eyes; and from this circumstance he obtained the appellation of the *Blind*, by which he was afterwards distinguished. The subjects of this unfortunate prince, incensed at the cruel treatment he had received, compelled the perpetrators of the crime to fly to Novogorod, and reinstated their lawful sovereign at Moscow, where he died.

A. D. 1450. In the midst of this general confusion arose one of those men, whom strong and violent passions inspire with boldness, activity, and resolution; and in whom impetuous vices sometimes produce the happy effects of heroic virtues. John Basilowitz I. by his invincible spirit and refined policy, became both the conqueror and deliverer of his country, and laid the foundation of that grandeur, by which Russia has been since distinguished. Observing with indignation the narrow limits of his power, on his accession to the throne, he immediately revolved within himself the means of enlarging his dominions. He married Sophia, the daughter of Thomas Paleologus, who had been expelled from Constantinople, and obliged to take refuge in Rome, where the pope portioned this princess. To this alliance, the Russians owed their deliverance from the yoke of the Tartars; and Sophia impelled her husband to attempt his freedom and that of his people. Taking advantage of a war in which the Tartars were engaged with the Poles, and having in the mean time considerably increased his forces, Basilowitz not only openly disclaimed

ed all subjection to that people, but also attacked their dominions, and made himself master of Casan, where he was crowned with the diadem of that kingdom.

The province of Permia, with great part of Lapland and Asiatic Bulgaria, soon submitted to his arms; and Great Novogorod, a city then famous among the Russians, who used to express their sense of its strength and importance by a proverbial expression, was reduced by his generals, after a siege of seven years. All the north beheld, with astonishment and dismay, the rapid increase of his power: foreign nations courted his alliance; and the several petty princes of Russia submitted to him without resistance.

He annexed Servia to his dominions; and defeated the Lithuanians near the river Wedrasch. Elated by this success, the Russians invaded Livonia, but suffered a defeat, in which ten thousand of them were slain. Dispirited by this discomfiture, and being then engaged in war with the Tartars, the Poles, and the city of Pleskow, Basilowitz dispatched an embassy to the grand-master of the knights of the cross, and concluded a truce with him for fifty years.

John Basilowitz may justly be reckoned as the founder of the Russian empire. He possessed all the qualities which constitute a conqueror: he was enterprising, intrepid, and indefatigable; but he had all the vices of a barbarous age, and all the ferocity of a savage country. He had a commanding aspect, a gigantic stature, an astonishing strength, and a fierce and terrific look. Though he punished drunkenness severely in others, he indulged in it himself: he rarely passed a day without in-

toxicating himself at table. The excess of liquor laid him asleep; but he awoke in good humour. Notwithstanding his defects, he was honoured with the surname of *Great*. After his conquest of Casan, he assumed the title of czar, which signifies emperor; but it was more used by his successors.

A. D. 1505. On the death of John Bazilowitz, the crown ought of right to have devolved to his eldest son Demetrius, whom he had by a former wife; but Sophia, by means of various and artful insinuations, obtained it for her own son Gabriel. Demetrius was confined in a prison, where he died of hunger or poison. On ascending the throne, Gabriel, disliking his own name, assumed that of Basilius Twanowitz.

Alexander, king of Poland, thinking that Russia would again be distracted by factions and civil wars, which might afford him an opportunity of recovering the territories lost by his father, marched into Lithuania; but finding no possible means of relieving or enthroning the young Demetrius, he retired into Poland, where he died soon after. Basilius, in his turn, supposing that the Poles would disagree about the choice

A. D. 1507. of a new king, prepared to take advantage of their dissentions; but his expectations being frustrated by their unanimous election of Sigismund I. he sent an army into Lithuania, and besieged Smolensko, under pretence that his sister Helena, who had been married to the late sovereign, had not been treated with the respect due to her rank and dignity. The resistance of the inhabitants, however, and the approach of a large and powerful army of Poles

Poles and Crim-Tartars, who were marching to the relief of the place, compelled the Russians to raise the siege, and return into their own country. Thither also the enemy followed them, and penetrating to the gates of Moscow, made the czar tremble on his throne, and obliged him to submit to such conditions as the victors thought proper to impose.

The Tartars a second time entered Russia with an innumerable force, ravaged the country, and made themselves masters of Moscow. Basilius was obliged to acknowledge himself their vassal, and to promise to pay them an annual tribute. Machmetgeri, the Tartar khan, having caused his own statue to be erected in Moscow, as a mark of his sovereignty, compelled the Russian monarch, who had fled to Novogorod, to return to his capital; to bring thither in person the first payment of the tribute; and, as a token of his submission, to prostrate himself before the statue. But no sooner were the Tartars departed, than the Muscovites broke in pieces the statue of Machmetgerei, and shook off the yoke.

Basilius having determined to marry, he convened a council of the principal persons in his dominions, and desired their opinion, whether it would be more conducive to the interest of Russia, that he should espouse a native or a foreigner. They all agreed that it would be most proper to marry a woman of their own nation. Accordingly, no less than fifteen hundred young ladies were assembled, that from their number he might make his choice. The fair one, who obtained the preference, was named Salomea, with whom the czar lived twenty years, without having by her any children. Disgusted by her

sterility, or impelled by other motives, he divorced her, and compelled the unfortunate czarina to be immured in a convent. Salomea was almost forgotten, when news arrived at court that she was pregnant. The czar sent women to ascertain the truth of this report: they returned, and informed him that it was authentic. Basilius thought it very extraordinary; but Salomea protested that she had never known any other man; and said, that she had been delivered of a son who would appear in due time to revenge her wrongs. The czar gave himself no farther concern respecting this business, but married another wife, named Helen, whose son John succeeded him in the government, at the age of three years.

Helen is described as a woman of an abandoned character and dissolute morals. The czar, whether ignorant or regardless of her conduct, showed her great affection. But the guardians of the young monarch were not equally indulgent: as she continued to pursue her licentious courses, they put her to death, fastened her paramour to a spit, and roasted him alive.

A. D. 1533. John Basilowitz* II. applied himself to such studies as might qualify him for governing his vast dominions. He sent an embassy to the emperor Charles V. and requested that priests might be sent from Germany, to instruct him and his subjects in the doctrines and ceremonies of the Latin church. He also desired, that some wise and experienced states-

* The termination *witz* denotes, that the person is the *eldest son* of a great family, and is frequently given to the presumptive heir of the crown.

men,

men, together with artists, architects, and mechanicians, might accompany them, in order to civilise the people under his government. To this request the emperor Charles readily agreed, and the Russian ambassador engaged upwards of three hundred Germans, who repaired to Lubec, with an intent to proceed from thence to Livonia. But the inhabitants of that place, who were very powerful, and wished to engross the whole commerce of the north, represented to the emperor the dangerous consequence of thus affording instruction to the Russians, which would enable them to establish manufactures in their own country. The Germans were persuaded to return, and the Russian ambassador was imprisoned on his arrival at Lubec. The czar was highly incensed at these proceedings, and amply revenged himself on the daring authors of this insolence.

He afterwards ordered his ambassador at Vienna to remind the emperor Ferdinand, and the empire, of the request he had formerly made to Charles V. He declared that his reasons for wishing to have artists and architects from Germany, rather than from any other nation, were, because he knew the Germans to be an upright, virtuous, and honest people; because they were his neighbours; and because he himself reigned over those very provinces in Scythia, which had formerly been inhabited by the Teutons. He requested that the artists might be accompanied by officers and men sufficient to form for him two regiments; the one of cavalry, and the other of infantry; and promised that they should never be employed against the Christians, and only against the Turks,

Turks. These arguments, however, were ineffectual; and the imperial court perceived that the czar's design was to introduce the arts and military discipline into his dominions. And the emperor of Germany dreading the ascendency which those barbarians might acquire, if properly instructed and disciplined, sent them neither artists nor officers.

The czar had for some time negociated a treaty of marriage for the princess Catharine Jagellonica, sister to Sigismund Augustus, king of Poland; but disagreeing in one of the articles of the matrimonial contract, the Poles, by way of derision, sent him a white mare finely capasisoned. Incensed at this insult, Basilowitz vowed revenge, and made them feel the weight of his resentment.

In order to prove the attachment or aversion of the Russians to his person and government, he abdicated the throne, and appointed prince Simeon, who was of Cassanian extraction, but had been baptized, and resided at the court of Moscow, to be czar of Russia. The people assembled, and represented to him, in the most respectful terms, the anguish they suffered, and the dangers to which the state was exposed by this measure, and humbly besought that he would resume the government. Basilowitz pretending to yield to their importunity, consented to re-ascend the throne, and, a few days after, returned to his capital.

The czar obtained some successes against the Swedes and Danes, for which he is supposed to have been indebted in a great measure to German discipline. Either, therefore, all the princes of Germany had not been equally politic as the emperor,

emperor, but had suffered the emigration of some of their military men; or, what, perhaps, is more probable, Basilowitz had procured those instructors in spite of, and unknown to, their sovereigns. By their assistance he was enabled to beat the Germans themselves. It is related, that when some Livonian officers were carried through the streets of Moscow in triumph, two captive Tartar kings, who were witnesses of the spectacle, spit in their faces, and said, "You "German dogs have well merited this treatment, "for having put into the hands of the Russians "that scourge with which they first chastised "us, and now punish you."

It was a great and unexpected satisfaction to this czar, that, during his reign, some Englishmen, who had sailed on a voyage of discovery, landed in Russia, at the place which is now the port of Archangel; and Basilowitz became acquainted with persons of that nation, who, by their abilities and deportment, acquired his favour in such a degree, that he particularly encouraged the English commerce, and thus opened a new channel of intercourse with a highly polished people, by which the Russians obtained a fresh incitement to activity and industry. His affection for the English was so great, that he formed the design of marrying a lady of that nation. He had a great esteem for queen Elizabeth, and repeatedly begged that she would grant him an asylum in her dominions, if he should ever be reduced to the necessity of leaving his subjects, who were extremely ungrateful to him, and greatly discontented with the innovations which he attempted to effect in their manners and behaviour. A. D. 1553.

baggage and artillery. To complete their misfortunes, their allies did not meet them at the place appointed; and the Russians and Tartars becoming more bold, in proportion as the weakness and timidity of their enemies increased, followed them on all sides, and obliged them to make a shameful and precipitate retreat. Zerebrinow attacked their ships, of which he took several, and sunk the rest; and the grand enterprize of Selim terminated in loss and disgrace.

The Swedes and Poles making continual inroads into Russia, committed many acts of cruelty, and occasioned much confusion in the empire. The czar, contrary to his usual custom, remained at this time inactive; and the Russians murmured at a conduct, which they considered as more pusillanimous than prudent. Several of the nobles, therefore, made remonstrances to Basilowitz, offered him their lives and fortunes, and entreated him to wipe off the disgrace which so long an inactivity would inevitably occasion. They declared that a numerous and powerful army should soon be in readiness; and that if he would give his eldest son the command, his presence would inspire them with courage to surmount the greatest difficulties.

Basilowitz naturally passionate, was highly incensed at this address, which he considered as an implied charge of cowardice, and answered, that as his subjects wished for a sovereign, who would be obedient to their wills, and accountable to them for his conduct, they were at liberty to chuse and elect another monarch. The Russians afraid of the wrath, to which they had provoked the czar, prostrated themselves at his feet, and protested, that it was not through any

any disaffection to his person and government, they had ventured to make this remonstrance. Basilowitz then insisted that they should discover the authors of this rash undertaking; and suspecting that his son was concerned in this matter, and that this proposition had been suggested by him, reprimanded him severely. The young prince, extremely sorry to find himself suspected by his father, requested permission to justify himself; but the czar refused to hear him, and happening to hold in his hand a staff tipped with iron, made a motion with it, as if to drive him away, when the weapon unfortunately striking on the prince's temple, he fell motionless at the feet of his parent.

Penetrated with grief at this dreadful sight, Basilowitz passed from extreme anger to the most piercing sorrow: he fell on the body of his son, clasped him in his arms, and pressed him to his bosom, with expressions of the most lively and tender affection. The prince recovered so as to be able to assure his father, that there was no conspiracy meditated against him; and, far from ever harbouring any design of that nature, he besought the Almighty to give the czar the empire of the universe, and to add to his life the days which had been taken from his own. He died soon after, to the inexpressible grief of Basilowitz. What added to the loss both of the czar and the state, was that this prince was deservedly the object of all their hopes; his underbrother, Theodore, being of a weak second standing; and the third, Demetrius, an infant. Basilowitz did not long survive the death of his beloved son, whose unhappy and untimely end threw him into a melancholy, of which he died. A. D. 1584.

In this czar, Russia lost one of her greatest monarchs. He was a profound politician, and well acquainted with the interests of his empire and of the neighbouring states. He was constantly engaged in hostilities with the Tartars, the Poles, the Swedes, the Danes, or the Turks. He was valiant, and almost always successful in war; but when not victorious, he did not despair under defeat. He generally gained some advantages by his treaties, even though they were not entirely in his favour. Considering the age in which he lived, his mind was well informed. He was tolerant in matters of religion, and would suffer none to be persecuted, on account of the creed they professed; and used to say, that conviction must arise from reason, and not from violence and tortures, which might make men hypocrites, but would never render them good Christians. The Jews, however, he would not suffer to remain in his dominions, and thought that those, who had betrayed and crucified the Redeemer of the world, ought not to be tolerated by any prince, who professed Christianity.

John Basilowitz was hasty and passionate; and in the first moments of his anger, committed many things, which cannot be excused or palliated, and of which he afterwards repented. His enemies have endeavoured to represent him as hypocritical in matters of religion; but his devotion was certainly unfeigned, and proceeded from the heart. Persuaded that monarchs were sovereign pontiffs in their own dominions, he frequently officiated in person in that capacity; and on these occasions retired to the monastery of Alexandrowa, where he prepared himself

himself for those holy functions, which he performed with patriarchal dignity. The monks he hated on account of their idleness, and considered them as the locusts of the state. The charge of avarice, which several writers have alleged against him, is refuted by the pensions he granted to foreigners, the many churches he built, and the magnificence of his court.

He found himself so circumstanced, that the welfare and glory of the empire required greater and more difficult enterprizes, than any of his predecessors had undertaken. He was also determined, if possible, to civilize his subjects, by introducing among them the manners and arts of other nations; an arduous attempt, which one of his successors completed, but which raised murmurs and complaints against Basilowitz, who was considered as the author of strange innovations. The nature of the people over whom he ruled, rendered severity necessary; and their conduct required that punishment should be vigorous and exemplary. Many writers have, therefore, represented him as the cruelest of men and worst of tyrants; but had they considered the circumstances of his situation, it is probable they would have viewed him in another light. At stated times, persons of every description, who thought themselves aggrieved, were admitted to his presence, and allowed to present petitions, which he read and answered. If any of these contained complaints against his ministers or governors, and they were found to have injured or oppressed even the meanest of his subjects, they were punished according to the nature of the crime. He was seven times married, and had besides a great number of con-

cabines. Historians have related of him some instances of lewdness, which, if true, disgrace his memory.

We cannot close the character of this prince, without observing, that neither solicitations nor interest could ever influence him in the disposal of offices or employments, which he always endeavoured to confer on those who were best qualified for the trust. Seldom has the world seen a monarch more warmly attached to justice and good order. Detesting drunkards, whom he considered as capable of committing the most flagrant and detestable crimes, he ordered them to be imprisoned according to the degree of their ebriety. Those who contracted debts, without possessing the ability to discharge them, he deemed pernicious to society, affixed on them a brand of infamy, and sent them into banishment. He composed a body of law, collected from military precedents and customs, and called it "The Book of Justice." This work, which he delivered to his judges, was ever afterwards observed, and made the standard in all legal proceedings; though it was not printed till the reign of Alexis Michaelowitz.

He left two sons; Theodore Iwanowitz, that succeeded him, and Demetrius, an infant, whom he placed under the tutelage of the knez Bogdan Bielski. This guardian was a man of a bold and enterprising disposition, and of great genius, but extremely haughty and cruel, and ready to sacrifice every thing to his ambition.

Theodore was twenty years of age when he ascended the throne. His person was engaging and his temper amiable; but his understanding was so weak, that during the life of his father, the

the ringing of bells was his chief amusement; a circumstance which induced Basilowitz frequently to say, that he was fitter to be the son of a sexton than of a prince. The aspiring Bielski, sensible of this want of capacity in Theodore, thought it would be no difficult matter to seize on the sovereignty, if, by excluding the elder brother as incapable of governing so vast an empire, he could place his pupil on the throne. But the grandees of the empire, to whom Bielski had applied in order to learn their sentiments of the matter, perceiving that, under the specious pretext of consulting the welfare of the state, he aimed at making himself sole master of the empire, vigorously opposed his designs. Finding himself thus disappointed, he endeavoured to effect by force what he could not compass by fraud. He raised forces, bribed some of the troops in Moscow, took possession of the castle of that city, and began to act with despotic authority. The nobility, alarmed at these proceedings, made the people sensible that this haughty minister aimed at nothing less than usurping the throne: upon which they immediately laid seige to the castle, and reduced him to such streights, that he attempted to escape in disguise; but being taken, he was allowed the choice of renouncing the management of affairs, or suffering death. He chose the former, and banished himself to one of the most remote parts of the empire, in the kingdom of Casan.

Theodore married the sister of the knez Boris Gudenow, who, taking advantage of the weakness and incapacity of his brother-in-law, found means to seize insensibly on all his authority. To a distinguished birth, he joined the most in-

sinuating address, which rendered him capable of undertaking and executing any enterprise. He had much magnanimity, but was naturally cruel; and he affected an air of meeknesss and condescension, which concealed the most ambitious designs. His first attempt was to gain the people and the nobles by repeated acts of beneficence, and by rendering himself accessible to all. By these means, he raised himself to the offices of prime-minister, commander in chief, and co-regent of the empire, with universal approbation.

The ambitious Gudenow, unable to endure even a nominal superior, for he exercised all the functions of the sovereign authority in the name of Theodore, whom he governed at his will, resolved to make himself sole master of the throne of Russia. For this purpose, under pretence of rewarding their services, by bestowing upon them governments and other considerable employments, he removed to a distance those whom he thought capable of perceiving, or obstructing his design. Every thing seemed to favour his wishes. King John of Sweden was more intent upon religion than war; and a misunderstanding, which existed between him and his brother duke Charles, would scarcely allow him to intermeddle in the affairs of his neighbours. The czarina, the sister of Gudenow, who had born to Theodore only one child, was reputed barren; and the states of Russia, in pursuance of an ancient custom, demanded that she should be divorced, and immured in a convent, and that the emperor should marry the sister of knez Floro Iwanowitz Zilphouseis. This measure, however was strongly opposed by Boris, who artfully

fully insinuated to the patriarch, that if the czar should espouse another consort and have heirs, and the young Demetrius also should arrive at maturity, great disturbances would arise in the empire. By these arguments he gained to his interest the head of the Russian church, who ordered Floro's sister to be sent directly to a convent. He then endeavoured to conciliate the affections of the people by several popular acts; particularly by surrounding the city of Moscow with a stone wall, and making many improvements at Smolensko.

The young Demetrius, the pupil of Bogdan Bielski was now almost the only obstacle to Gudenow's design. His father, John Basilowitz, II. had given him the city of Uglitz, with its dependencies, for his appanage. This prince, scarcely nine years of age, was brought up under the care of the czarina-dowager his mother, who employed her whole time in his education. Boris Gudenow resolved to sacrifice this innocent victim to his ambition, and committed the execution of this horrid deed to an officer, whom he promised to reward in proportion to the service performed. This man soon found an opportunity of fulfilling his cruel orders; but Gudenow, who knew that if he was capable of committing such a crime, he would be also capable of divulging it, assassinated him with his own hand, on his return from Uglitz. Some authors, however, assert that the real Demetrius was not killed, and that his mother, opportunely warned of the danger of her son, substituted another child in his room, and thereby saved his life.

But

But though the truth of the affair remained problematical, the crime was certain. The news of the murder soon reached Moscow, and though the author of it was not named, he was immediately suspected. The dowager-czarina complained of it to the emperor, from whom she demanded justice; and Gudenow himself gave orders for discovering the assassin; but finding that the people considered him as the perpetrator of this bloody deed, he endeavoured to divert their thoughts to something more immediately interesting. For this purpose, he caused the city of Moscow to be set on fire in different places during the night; and, every measure having been duly preconcerted, the fire raged with extreme violence, and the conflagration became general. Boris ran to every quarter, and appeared remarkably active in endeavouring to suppress the flames, and full of compassion to the sufferers. On the morrow he assembled those who had sustained the greatest damages, and, after lamenting so dismal an accident, promised not only to obtain from the czar a sum of money sufficient to compensate their losses, but that he would rebuild their houses at his own expence. He then dismissed them astonished at his generosity and goodness of heart, and highly pleased that such a man was at the head of the government.

Not long after this transaction, Theodore was taken ill; and it being apprehended that his disease was mortal, the chief of the nobility requested him to appoint a successor to the throne. Accordingly, he held out his staff to Theodore Nikititz, who was his cousin and next heir, but who refused it. It was then presented to his brother

brother Alexander, who also declining to accept it, offered it to a third, that acted after the same manner. The fourth took it, only to present it to a knez, who was not related to the family, and who also refused it. Theodore, therefore, to whom it was now returned, flung it on the floor, saying, "let him be emperor who picks it up." Boris Gudenow then stepped forward, and took it, to the great dissatisfaction of all the Russian nobility, and a considerable part of the nation. It has been suspected, and not without reason, that his brother-in-law, tired of seeing Theodore reign so much longer than he expected, administered to him a slow poison. The czarina seemed so well convinced of this circumstance, that she reproached Boris with the murder of her husband, and refused to see or speak to him during Theodore's illness.

In this prince terminated the family of Ruric, which had governed Russia upwards of seven hundred years.

CHAP. III.

From the Extinction of the Lineage of Ruric to the Accession of the present reigning Family of Romanow.

WHEN the six weeks of mourning for the death of Theodore had expired, Boris assembled the nobility and principal citizens of Moscow, and thus addressed them: "I restore to you the sceptre of the late "czar. After the trial which I have made, I can- "not A. D. 1597.

"not consent to bear the burden of a crown. I "quit the throne; and do you fill it with whom "you please." Having thus spoken, he withdrew, and retired to a monastry at the distance of three miles, leaving the astonished assembly in the utmost perplexity, relative to the manner in which they were to act. Some of his creatures observed, that the present meeting was scarcely sufficiently numerous for determining so important an affair, and that it would be proper and necessary to convene deputies from all the cities and provinces of the empire.

This advice was approved and followed, and, after some debates, Boris was nominated to succeed to the vacant throne; but he artfully refused the crown, and caused a report to be spread by his emissaries, that he was about to seclude himself entirely from the world, and to assume the monastic habit; whilst others of them published a rumour, that the khan of the Tartars was advancing at the head of an innumerable army, to invade Russia when destitute of a sovereign. At this alarming intelligence, the people ran in crowds to the convent, tearing their hair, and beating their breasts, like men frantic with despair, and vowing that they would never quit the place, till Boris should have promised to become their czar. Pretending to be overcome by their prayers and intreaties, he accepts the crown, saying, "Well then, I will "be your sovereign, since providence so or-"dains."

At the same time, he ordered all the nobles and the soldiers to meet him at Zirpokow, on the frontiers of the empire, whither he repaired at the appointed time, and where he found an army

army of five hundred thousand men assembled, and ready to receive his commands. With this immense force he took the field, in order to repel the Tartars, who had no idea of committing the slightest act of hostility. Instead, therefore, of meeting the numerous enemies that had been expected, the only Tartars that appeared was a single ambassador, accompanied by a small train of attendants, who was going to Moscow to propose an alliance with Boris. Counterfeiting, however, great surprise and astonishment, he exhibited to the ambassador the spectacle of his army drawn out in battle array, of a mock engagement, of a military entertainment, and dismissed him loaded with presents. On the nobles and the soldiers he bestowed great largesses, which procured for him a new oath of allegiance. He then displayed his magnificence and liberality, by regaling, during six weeks successively, ten thousand chosen men under rich and sumptuous pavilions, where they were treated with the most exquisite viands, furnished in large profusion.

In the mean time, confidential persons were sent to Moscow, who announced that the Tartars, intimidated by the prudence, and the formidable preparations of the new czar, had not dared to advance. The people, believing this report, walked forth in crowds to meet the pacific conqueror, whom they conducted in triumph into Moscow, where he caused himself to be crowned by the patriarch. During that ceremony, the humane and compassionate Boris made a vow not to shed any blood for five years, nor to condemn criminals to any severer doom than banishment. In consequence, a great number

ber of nobles, who were not in the interest of Boris, were soon sent into exile under various pretexts. Those, who might seem to have any claim to the crown, were prohibited to marry; and Theodore Nikititz Romanow, to whom the late czar had offered his sceptre, was thrown into prison, and separated from his wife. They were afterwards compelled to enter into different convents, to take monastic vows, and to change their names. Theodore assumed that of Philaretus.

A. D. 1601. In the midst, however, of these successes, the bosom of Boris became corroded by chagrin. A terrible famine reduced Moscow, and the adjacent country, to such extremity of distress, that the most shocking cruelties were committed, by the nearest relations upon each other; and, in many families, the fattest persons were killed to supply food for the rest. Even parents devoured their own children, and children their parents; and an ocular witness attests, that a number of assembled women having decoyed a peasant into one of their houses, killed and eat both him and his horse. This dreadful calamity continued for a great length of time; and, notwithstanding the efforts of the emperor to alleviate the general distress, there perished five hundred thousand persons in the city of Moscow only.

To this scourge was added the inquietude excited in the mind of Boris, by the resurrection of Demetrius, whom he had ordered to be murdered. It will be recollected, that a report had been propagated, that the mother of Demetrius, in lieu of her son, had substituted another child, whom she delivered to the assassins, and who suffered

suffered in his stead. Whether this Demetrius was the person he pretended to be, or an impostor, is a point difficult to be ascertained. By some means, the report of his being alive, reached the ear of Boris, who, being extremely uneasy at the rumour, employed every possible method to know the truth. Many persons were interrogated, and several questioned by torture. Others were banished; and the mother of Demetrius was removed to an obscure place, six hundred miles from Moscow, where she was strictly confined. At length, however, Boris received certain intelligence, that two monks had eloped from a convent and escaped into Poland; one of whom was supposed, from his age and figure, to be the person who was the object of his inquiry. The czar tried every means to have Demetrius delivered up to him; but finding his efforts ineffectual for that purpose, he sent a party of Cossacs to murder him, which however, they could not perform. This conduct of Boris naturally confirmed the belief, that this was the real Demetrius, and that the czar was not free from a conviction, that another child had been put to death in his stead.

By a concurrence of extraordinary circumstances, the young fugitive friar, whom we shall henceforward call Demetrius, obtained the confidence and friendship of a Lithuanian nobleman, who recommended him to the palatine of Sandomir. The palatine received him with great kindness, and promised him all the assistance in his power in restoring him to the throne of his ancestors. Through his recommendation, the republic of Poland entered strongly into the interest of Demetrius. The proofs

offered by the proscribed youth were examined in the diet; they were pronounced convincing, and he was acknowledged as legimate heir to the crown of Russia, and an army levied to place him on the Russian throne. In the mean time, an embassy arrived from Boris, to remind the king of Poland of the peace which subsisted between him and the czar; to insist on his delivering up Demetrius; and to warn him that his assisting that impostor, as he termed him, would occasion a war between the two nations, of which he might afterwards have cause to repent.

The grandees of Poland, unintimidated by the menaces of the czar, raised four thousand men, at the head of whom they placed Demetrius, who marched directly into Moscow, where many places immediately declared for him. This success, added to the miseries of the still raging famine, and the appearance of some extraordinary phenomena in the air, occasioned the utmost consternation and dismay among the Muscovites. Boris, extremely alarmed, assembled an army of two hundred thousand men, but distracted with suspicions, knew not to whom to confide the command of his troops. Concluding from the general complexion of his affairs, that it would be difficult, and perhaps impossible, to oppose effectual resistance to Demetrius, in a moment of despair he took poison, of which he died. Such was the end of Boris Gudenow, a man of strong parts, great courage, and a perfect master in the art of dissimulation. He seemed formed to govern; and had it not been for his cruel and tyrannical temper, no prince would have been more beloved by his subjects.

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On the death of Boris, his son Theodore, who was only fifteen years of age, and had been educated amidst flatterers and parasites, was raised to the throne. The conduct of this prince was brutal and insolent, and his disposition tyrannical. The army had not been informed of the death of Boris, when an officer, named Bosmanoff, arrived from Moscow, with orders to assume the chief command of the troops, and to administer to them the usual oath of fidelity and allegiance to the new czar. But instead of faithfully discharging his trust, he persuaded the soldiers to revolt to Demetrius, who received them with the greatest affability and kindness. A. D. 1605.

This defection of the army was soon known at court, where it occasioned the utmost consternation and dismay. Every one resolved to act as suited best his interest and advantage; and the name of Demetrius immediately resounded through the whole city of Moscow. The people entered the palace, which they plundered, and imprisoned the young czar, his mother, sister, and other relations. Demetrius being informed of these transactions, sent an order for strangling Theodore and his mother, which was accordingly executed. A few days after, he made his public entry into Moscow, and was crowned sovereign of all the Russias, with the greatest solemnity and magnificence, in the midst of universal plaudits. A. D. 1605.

Notwithstanding these successes, a party was formed against him, at the head of which were three brothers, of an ancient and noble family, named Zuski. They declared that Demetrius was an impostor, whose design was to extirpate

the nobility, to overturn the religion of Russia, and render the people slaves to Poland. The czar being informed of this conspiracy, caused the Zuskis to be arrested, condemned the two younger of three to banishment, and the eldest to be beheaded. Extraordinary preparations were made for the execution, that the example might awe the malcontents and quiet faction: the criminal was already on his knees upon the scaffold, and momentarily awaited the fatal stroke of the executioner, whose hand was uplifted, when Demetrius sent Zuski his pardon, and committed his punishment into exile. The czar was afterwards guilty of the decisive error of almost immediately recalling him, and even granting him his favour.

This conspiracy, and the causes which had occasioned it, ought to have rendered Demetrius extremely circumspect and cautious in his conduct towards the Russians: but, having been indebted for his good fortune to the Poles, he continued to show them attentions, which excited the jealousy of his subjects. The palatine of Sandomir had, from his protector, become his father-in-law; and Demetrius's marriage with the princess introduced at court the German manners, to which the complaisant husband appeared to give a preference. He even affected to disregard and contemn many of the rites and ceremonies of the Russians, their frequent ablutions, their genuflexions before images; and he indulged himself in the use of veal, which they consider as impure food. The ungrateful Zuski took care artfully to point out to public notice these acts of imprudence, which might exasperate the Russians against their sovereign; and also fomented

fomented and exasperated the discontent thus excited.

Though Demetrius was repeatedly forewarned of the designs of the conspirators, he neglected to take proper means for his safety, and had only thirty guards about him, when Zuski came at the head of an insurgent multitude to attack the palace. The czar immediately arose, and the cries of the wounded and the dying informing him of the cause of the tumult, he snatched a sabre, with which he would have engaged the conspirators; but being surrounded on all sides, he leaped from a window, broke his thigh in the fall, and remained helpless on the spot. In this condition, he was taken, and carried into the great hall of audience, where a strong guard was set over him. The conspirators put to death all the Poles they met with, treated the Polish ladies with the greatest brutality, and the empress herself escaped from the last insult only by the assistance of a Russian lady, who concealed her under her garments.

Zuski flattered himself, that, by dint of threats he should obtain from Demetrius a declaration, that the story of his mother having substituted another child in his place was false and without foundation. But the unfortunate czar still boldly maintained the legitimacy of his birth, and appealed to the testimony of his mother. Zuski, therefore, had recourse to the dowager-czarina, and insisted on her declaring upon oath whether the captive prince was her son or not. She clined for some time to give an answer to this question, but at length confessed, that her child had been put to death. Zuski returned with this reply; upon which Demetrius advanced

vanced such cogent arguments in refutation of that confession, whether feigned or extorted by fear, that, through an apprehension lest his words should produce conviction in the minds of his hearers, he was murdered. His dead body was afterwards stripped naked, and abandoned to the outrages of the populace, who dragged it through the streets of Moscow, to the very spot where Zuski had received his pardon at the moment of impending death. Did the people intend this as an indirect censure of the mistaken lenity of the unfortunate Demetrius; or was this act designed to cast a reproach on the ingratitude and baseness of his murderer?

Great pains were taken by Zuski to publish all the reasons, which could tend to establish a belief that Demetrius was an impostor; but the testimonies, which he adduced, were, even at the time, considered as futile and unsatisfactory; and when set in opposition to those with which nature herself had furnished that unfortunate prince, his proofs fall to the ground. It had been observed in his childhood, that one of his legs was shorter than the other, and that he had a wart under his right eye: the emperor Demetrius had the same marks. Besides, we can scarcely imagine that so prudent and generous a nation as the Poles, should have been mistaken in an affair, which they so attentively examined. Or, if we suppose that a wish of keeping the Russians employed at home, by domestic and intestine dissentions, should have induced them to favour the imposture, how could the palatine of Sandomir have consented to sacrifice his daughter to a man, whose rank

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and birth would have admitted the slightest suspicion?

Immediately after the death of Demetrius, the nobles and senators at Moscow proceed to the election of a new sovereign; and their suffrages being equally divided between Zuski and John Galitzin, one of the assembly observed: "These lords are of equal merit, and we have done our duty; but in order to decide this matter, let us consult the people, that no person need blame our conduct." This advice was approved and followed; and the suffrages of the people determined the election in favour of Zuski. If the remembrance of Demetrius caused him no remorse, at least a shadow of that prince disturbed his repose: for the name of shadow may be properly given to a kind of phantom of the late czar, which never made its appearance. Two noblemen who were discontented with the government of their country, without exhibiting him to view, published that he still existed. They raised an army, combated and defeated Zuski, but were in their turn defeated, made prisoners, and put to death. A. D. 1606.

To this shade succeeded a real being, who has been called a third Demetrius. He was a schoolmaster at Socola, a small town in Polish Russia, and pretended that, notwithstanding the fracture of his thigh, in consequence of his leap from the window, he had been carried off in the midst of the confusion by some faithful subjects, and transported to that remote place, where he had undertaken the instruction of children, for the sake of gaining a livelihood. If the

Poles

Poles were deceived on this occasion, it was because they were willing to be so; for this new Demetrius was far from exhibiting the same symptoms of characteristic truths as the first. The only points that favoured a resemblance, were the countenance of this impostor, a coincidence of age, and a large stock of effrontery.

But the Poles, whose interest it was to excite disturbances which might divide and distress the Russians, gave every assistance in their power to this pretender. The impostor, therefore, soon found himself at the head of an army of sixty thousand Poles, and eight thousand Zaporog Cossacs; with which he attacked the czar's forces, and defeated them with great slaughter. The victor, whose numbers were daily increased by multitudes of disaffected Russians, pursued the vanquished to the gates of Moscow, and laid siege to the city. Zuski, finding it difficult to extricate himself from the impending danger, released the palatine of Sandomir and his daughter, on condition of their employing their interest in engaging the king of Poland to withdraw his forces, and desist from aiding the pretender Demetrius. No sooner, however, were they at liberty, than they determined to embrace so favourable an opportunity of revenging themselves on Zuski. Accordingly, having repaired to the camp of the Poles, the widow of the first Demetrius appeared with a splendid retinue, acknowledged the impostor as her husband, and treated him with great kindness and respect. He received her with all imaginable pomp, and with demonstration of unfeigned joy. This public testimony in his favour, induced great numbers

to join him, who had hitherto doubted his legitimacy, and almost all Russia declared for the impostor.

But the widow of the first Demetrius neither acted sincerely, nor cordially, for she did not preserve for him either the friendship or the assistance of the Poles. These, having aided the impostor merely for the sake of obtaining from the emperor Zuski certain objects which they had in view, changed sides, and assisted the czar in expelling the schoolmaster. He fled into Tartary, where he was afterwards assassinated. The Russians, weary of Zuski and his government, imputed to him the series of misfortunes by which they had been afflicted during his reign; and as those calamities, among which are principally to be reckoned the horrors of war, arose chiefly from the Poles, the Russians thought they might more easily repair their past losses, and prevent any future injuries, by choosing an emperor from that nation. Zuski was, therefore, deposed, shaven, and immured in a convent, where he died of chagrin, or of poison voluntarily taken.

The crown was offered to Uladislaus, the son of Sigismund, king of Poland, who, instead of presenting himself to receive it, sent before him an army of Poles, that committed every species of disorder. At length, the continued delays of Uladislaus, the insolence and licentiousness of the Poles, and the impatience of the Russians, who saw no end of their miseries, excited the people to discontent and insurrection. They loudly complained of the outrages they had received from the Poles, who ought to have protected and defended them; and the Polanders, A. D. 1610.

Polanders, apprehending a general revolt, forbade the inhabitants to assemble or bear arms. Incensed at this prohibition, an universal insurrection took place in Moscow; and the Poles finding themselves unable successfully to oppose the Russians, set fire to the city, and the conflagration consumed one hundred and eighty thousand houses. During the pretended reign of Uladislaus, which continued only three years, another Demetrius made his appearance, who, being betrayed by his adherents, was taken and put to death.

The election of Uladislaus being rendered of no effect by his never appearing to accept the crown, the Russians proceeded to the choice of a new sovereign. They were, however, greatly divided in opinion, several wishing for a foreign prince, as less susceptible of predilection in favour of any particular family; while others, jealous of the national glory, insisted on having a native of the country to rule over them. After many persons had been named and rejected, one of the electors proposed Michael Theodorowitz Romanow, son of Philaretus, that relative to whom Theodore on his death-bed had granted his sceptre, and whom Boris, after he obtained possession of the throne, had separated from his wife and confined in a convent. He had been carried a prisoner into Poland, but, having taken orders, was decorated with the title of bishop.

This proposal was greatly approved by many, especially by the people, who thought him possessed of qualities, which were necessary for preserving the tranquillity of the state. He was temperate, pious, and prudent; and, though only seventeen years of age, the Russian nobles who

who knew him, represented him to the others as capable of restoring the empire to its pristine splendour and greatness. The assembly, however, not willing to decide absolutely in his favour, till they were better acquainted with his character, deputed two of their number to wait upon his mother, and to desire she would send her son to Moscow. That affectionate parent was no sooner informed of the purport of the message, than she wept and lamented for her son, who, she imagined, was demanded of her only to undergo the same fate, which the last czars had suffered. Being encouraged, however, by the remonstrances of her friends, she suffered him to depart. Michael obtained the approbation of the assembly; for, though some of the electors considered his youth as an objection, the majority exclaimed, "The Almighty, who has chosen him, will also assist and protect him."

CHAP. IV.

From the Accession of the now reigning Family of Romanow, to the Extinction of the male Race of that Lineage.

THE commencement of the reign of Michael Theodorowitz equaled the most sanguine expectations of his friends, and exhibited strong marks of prudence and ability. His disposition was mild and engaging; he delighted in the arts of peace, and was determined, if possible, to efface the remembrance of the A. D. 1613.

the cruelties of his predecessors. His first act was an invitation sent to his father, who had matured his wisdom under affliction, and was grown grey in adversity. Having taken no part in the late intrigues, the old man had no resentments to gratify. The son always shewed a respectful deference to the opinion of his father, whose advice was the rule of his conduct. The constant proofs which he exhibited of filial piety and affection, gained him the love and admiration of the nation; and he merited the general esteem of his subjects, by bestowing the greatest attention on every object that could be conducive to the welfare of his people.

He married the daughter of a poor but virtuous man, whom the messengers of the czar found at his plough, when they announced to him the honour which the emperor intended to confer on his family. Eudocia, equally virtuous as beautiful, gained the love of the whole nation, by her prudent and condescending behaviour. Distressed innocence always found in her a sincere friend; and the poor never applied to her in vain. She proved herself worthy of the emperor's choice, and assisted her husband, in proportion to her abilities, and in the degree suitable to her sex, in supporting the burden of the government after the death of his father.

Michael Theodorowitz was so much respected by his neighbours for his equity, prudence, and piety, that, besides the crowd of his own subjects, who were attracted to his court by a sentiment of veneration for his person and government, it was constantly adorned by the presence of embassadors from many princes of Europe and Asia, who were desirous of obtaining and preserving the

the friendship and alliance of so great a monarch.—Ye sovereigns, desirous of vain glory, was not this renown infinitely more estimable, than that which is acquired by conquest and the force of arms?—This great and pacific prince, beloved by all his subjects, who considered him as their father and friend, died in the forty-ninth year of his age, and the thirty-third of his reign, and bequeathed his crown to his son, then in his sixteenth year.

Alexis Theodorowitz, who succeeded to the throne on the death of his father, A. D. 1645. had not, like him, the good fortune to be guided in the first steps of his career by a Mentor interested in the happiness of him and his people. Michael imagined that he had wisely appointed as his counsellor and first minister Boris Morosou, a man till then held in estimation and respect, and possessed of great abilities, but unfortunately tainted with the spirit of ambition. He advised Alexis to marry the daughter of Miloslauki, a nobleman of small fortune, but strongly attached to the interest of the minister; and he himself soon after espoused the sister of the empress. No sooner were the nuptial ceremonies performed, than Morosou, now brother-in-law to the czar, and Miloslauki, his father, associating themselves with Leponti Stepanowitz Plesscou, chief judge of the supreme court, formed a triumviral cabal, and took into their own hands the entire management of the government, while the young emperor passed his time in the enjoyment of pleasures which they were careful to afford him.

Their authority was exercised with effrontery which exasperated the people. Plesscou made

open traffic of justice; Miloslauki publicly sold offices and employments; and Morosou enjoyed his pre-eminence, with disgusting haughtiness and ostentation. The inhabitants of Moscow, who had experienced the paternal government of Michael, exhibited their resentment at these exactions and oppressions. They petitioned the czar, but in vain: the bojars, who attended the emperor, followed the instructions of Morosou; and no answer was returned, nor any grievance redressed. Exasperated at this neglect, they lost all patience: they proceeded to the utmost excesses of unbridled licentiousness, not indeed against the czar, whose inexperience they pardoned, and whose innocence they respected, but against his faithless ministers, and their accomplices and agents, whom they loudly demanded to be put to death. Alexis complied with the wishes of the populace, and with difficulty saved the life of his father-in-law, by sacrificing the others. Taught by this lesson, Morosou afterwards became mild, affable, just, and obliging. The czar also was instructed by this act of popular vengeance to beware of reposing unlimited confidence in his ministers, and to guide the helm of the empire with his own hand. Accordingly, the sequel of this prince's reign was peaceful and happy, if we except some inconsiderable wars, of short duration, which he waged with the Swedes, the Poles, and other neighbouring nations.

During this reign appeared a daring impostor, who pretended to be the son of the great duke Basilius Iwanowitz Zuski; but whose name was Timoska Ankaduna, and was the son of a linen-draper at Wologda. His father having perceiv-

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ed in him some marks of an extraordinary genius, was at much expence in his education, and he became a person of consequence among his illiterate countrymen. His pleasing voice, and taste in singing the hymns and canticles of the church, recommended him to the archbishop, who took him into his service, in which he behaved so well, that feeling an esteem and regard for him, he gave him his grand-daughter in marriage. This alliance, which might have been very advantageous to him, finally proved his ruin. His good fortune now began to turn his brain: he assumed the quality of son-in-law to the waivode, or governor of Wologda. After the death of the archbishop, he dissipated the fortune of his wife, and went with his family to Moscow, where, through the recommendation and assistance of a friend, he obtained a lucrative office, attended with responsibility. In this new station, he recommenced his career of pleasure and extravagance; and finding that his first payment of taxes to the czar would be greatly defective, he borrowed of one of his friends the pearls and rings of his wife, under pretence of a ceremony which required some show. These he squandered in dissipation, like every thing else of which he obtained possession; and, when called upon for restitution, he denied that he had ever received them. His wife, the archbishop's grand-daughter, reproached him with his perfidiousness and dishonesty: upon which, fearing that he might be called to an account for his arrears to the treasury, and that his wife would be an evidence against him, he shut her up in a stove, set fire to the house, and burned her to death.

After this horrid transaction, Timoska escaped secretly into Poland, and it was thought at Moscow, that he had perished in the conflagration, with the rest of his family. Understanding, however, that the czar was about to send an ambassador to the king of Poland, and that his living at Warsaw was known in Russia, he went to Chmielnisky, general of the Cossacs, who enjoyed considerable authority, and begged his protection against the persecutions which he suffered, he said, on account of his being nearly related to the prince Basilius Iwanowitz Zuski. The embassy sent by the czar, was, he affirmed, for the purpose of demanding him. Timoska carried on this imposture with such art and address, that he insinuated himself into the favour of Chmielnisky, and acquired considerable repute. But as the name, which he had assumed, began to give him a dangerous celebrity, he did not think the general's protection sufficient, or that he was safe even in the Ukraine. He, therefore, suddenly quitted Poland, and repaired to Constantinople, where he abjured Christianity, and was circumcised. The fear of punishment for crimes committed in the Turkish dominions, induced him to visit Rome, where he became a Roman catholic.

From Rome he repaired to Vienna, and thence proceeded into Transylvania to prince Ragotzky, who gave him letters of recommendation to Christina, queen of Sweden. That princess received him with the greatest kindness, and, believing his story, allowed him an honourable subsistence. The Russian merchants residing at Stockholm, acquainted the czar with the pretensions of this impostor, who now affirmed that he was the son

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of Basilius Iwanowitz Zuski. Proofs demonstrative of the imposture were immediately collected and sent into Sweden; and the queen being undeceived, ordered him to be arrested and thrown into prison. He found means, however, to effect his escape, and fled to Brussels, where he sought the protection of the archduke Leopold. Dissatisfied probably with his reception, or with the little advantage which this place seemed to promise him, he went to Leipsic, where he embraced Lutheranism, and wrote his confession of faith in the Latin language. He afterwards visited Neustadt, in the duchy of Holstein, where, in consequence of letters from the czar to the duke, he was arrested, and sent prisoner to Moscow.

His behaviour then became ridiculous and inconsistent. At sometimes he affirmed that he was the son of Zuski, and at others, that his father's name was Basilius Domitian. Sometimes he endeavoured to make them believe that he was a Polander, and maintained that neither his person, language, nor manner of life, bore any resemblance to those of the Russians. At length he returned to his former story, and impudently asserted, that he was the son of the czar Basilius Iwanowitz Zuski. He told a romantic tale, of which the most important episode was, that the khan of Tartary had wished to employ him against the czar, and to give him the command of one hundred thousand men for that purpose; but that he bore too great a love to his country to involve it in confusion, and that God had prevented him from engaging in so criminal an undertaking. He spoke the Latin, Italian, German, and Turkish languages with great accu-

racy and fluency. A person, who was employed to examine him, contrived by dexterous management to draw from him even a written confession of his imposture; but when that document was again produced, for the purpose of extracting from him a formal and oral disavowal of his pretensions, he denied his own handwriting, and, from that period, persevered in asserting himself to be the son of Zuski. He was put to the torture in presence of several noblemen; but he still affirmed that that assertion was true. In short, notwithstanding the testimony of his mother, of his relatives, and of those who had known him in his employments and in his pleasures, he obstinately maintained his point, never contradicted himself under the greatest sufferings, and suffered capital punishment at Moscow.

During the reign of Alexis Theodorowitz appeared also another impostor, who was a Cossac, and had an agreeable person and uncommon understanding, and seemed to be about twenty-five years of age. It is said, that mere chance discovered who he was, and that he himself was ignorant of his own birth; but it seems more likely, that Uladislaus, who could ill brook the loss of the Russian crown, instructed him how to act, that he might serve as a pretext for declaring war against the czar, and be the means of transferring the empire to himself. It is, however, affirmed, that as this Cossac was descending into a bath in the little town of Samburg, in Polish Prussia, some marks of an extraordinary kind were observed upon his back; that Dmielouski, the treasurer of the crown, being informed of these circumstances, asked him several

several questions, and examined those strange characters; but that, not being able to understand them, he sent for a Russian priest, who, in a public assembly, immediately read "Demetrius, the son of Demetrius." These characters were made to signify, that this young man was the son of Griska Utropeja, the first usurper that took the name of Demetrius. It was said, that his mother, the daughter of the palatine of Sandomir, had been delivered of him in prison, and that the wife of a Cossac having been brought to bed at the same time, an interchange of children was effected; and that a Russian priest, who baptized the son of the princess, seeing him likely to remain unknown, had imprinted those characters between his shoulders, by means of a certain indelible liquor. Such was the improbable account of this Demetrius.

This impostor appeared at the court of Poland, where he was treated as the son of the czar, and connected himself with the famous Galga, a Tartarian prince, who was there a prisoner, and afterwards ascended the throne of Tartary. But on the death of Uladislaus, the complexion of affairs was materially changed by the election of John Casimir; and Demetrius, fearing that he should be delivered up to the emperor of Russia, with whom the new king seemed desirous of living in peace and friendship, retired to Revel, and from thence to Sweden; but, not thinking himself sufficiently safe in that country, he withdrew into Holstein. The duke owing the czar a large sum of money, he was informed, that, if he would deliver this impostor into the hands of the Russian monarch, the debt would be remitted him—a proposal which

which was readily accepted. Accordingly, the pretended Demetrius was seized and sent to Moscow, where he was confronted by an old woman, who called herself his mother. He was prosecuted as a disturber of the public tranquillity, and, being convicted, was condemned to be put to death, which was executed soon after. These examples prove what effects may be produced by daring boldness on the one hand, and credulity on the other, in a country benighted with the darkness of ignorance.

A. D. 1669. About this period, Stenko Razin, chief of the Cossacs, excited a dreadful rebellion against the czar. The cause of his discontent was said to be the ignominious death of his brother, who had commanded the Cossacs that served in the Russian army, during the campaigns of 1654 and 1655, against the Poles. The knez George Alexowitz Dolgorucki, commander in chief of all the forces employed in the expedition, ordered the Cossacs to remain in the field as long as he pleased; but not being accustomed to be compelled in their actions, they abandoned the Russian general, and ranged themselves under the banners of their own leader. This chief, who was Stenko Razin's brother, Dolgorucki called to an account for the conduct of his men, and ordered him to be hanged. This was the pretext of Stenko for taking up arms against his sovereign; and, at first, he appeared to be actuated by the incentives of patriotism, the glory of his nation, and the desire of just vengeance; but, after his first successes, it was manifest that he was influenced by ambition.

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He commenced his depredations on the river Wolga, where he took and plundered all the small vessels that he met with, and killed the men that refused to engage in his service. He then put himself at the head of an army of his countrymen, and ransacked every town, church, and monastery in the neighbourhood; and marched from thence to Iaik, a city situated on the river of the same name, which divides the kingdom of Astracan from the country of the Calmucs. He then proceeded to the Caspian sea, and advanced to the frontiers of Persia, where he pillaged the towns, and massacred the inhabitants. He had captured a Persian princess, who was beautiful and compliant. Being one day on board his yacht, amusing himself on the Wolga, and intoxicated with wine, he suddenly addressed himself to that river, and, after enumerating the rich presents which he had made his partisans, spoke as follows:—"And thou, "noble Wolga! thou, who hast wafted to me "such abundance of gold, silver, and other "precious effects—thou, my friend and defender, to whom I am indebted for my fortune "and advancement—I have given thee nothing: but I will now prove to thee my gratitude." Having concluded these words, he took the princess in his arms, and threw her into the river, with the pearls, diamonds, and other ornaments, with which she was adorned. What heightened the barbarity of this action was, that the lady was equally admired for the endowments of her mind as for the beauty of her person, and had always treated him with the greatest kindness.

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The grand principle of this rebel's policy, and by which he attracted numbers of soldiers to his standard, and retained them under his command, was to affect no pre-eminence over the Cossacs, except in the moment of battle, to appear only as their equal, and free from every other wish than that of establishing the empire of liberty*. He allowed them to indulge in every species of licentiousness, that he might render them equally culpable as himself. After he was defeated, therefore, by a just retribution, the punishment was also extended to the people who were the accomplices of his crimes, and the sharers of his iniquity.

Dolgorucki, the general who vanquished Stenko, erected a tribunal at Arsamas, where he executed so severe a judgment upon the rebels, that the avenues of the town seemed to resemble the terrific picture which the poets have given us of Tartarus. In one place were seen heaps of dead bodies, headless, and smeared with blood; in others, numbers of wretches impaled alive, uttering frighful shrieks, and suffering a thousand deaths at once; and on all sides gibbets, on each of which were hung forty or fifty men. Within the space of three months, more than eleven thousand persons were judicially condemned, and suffered death by the hands of the executioners.

Stenko, alarmed at the loss of his soldiers, and the dereliction of many of his friends, who effected a reconciliation with the government, knew not where to seek an asylum. At length,

* Mankind, alas! have been too often deluded by similar pretences.

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he suffered himself to be persuaded, that the czar had forgiven him, and was extremely desirous of seeing him at Moscow. He put implicit faith in this report, and travelled thither with his brother, who repeatedly represented to him on the journey, that punishment and death would more probably be their lot, than a pardon. Stenko, however, was so credulous as to confide in the assurances he had received, and did not perceive his error till he met a wretched waggon, in the midst of which was erected a gibbet, sure omen of his death, which soon followed, after he had been obliged to undergo the torture.

Such was the termination of an enterprize, which might have been attended with the most lamentable consequences to the Russian empire, if Stenko had been equally prudent as daring. The rebellion, however, is said to have cost Russia one hundred thousand fighting men; for even a greater number perished by famine and disease, than fell by the edge of the sword. These terrible executions were repugnant to the humane heart of Alexis, who regretted that he was under the sad necessity of putting so many persons to death; but, in certain conjunctures, such executions are necessary for the prevention of greater evils. Besides, it is only an act of justice to declare, that he omitted no practicable means of rendering his government mild and equitable. Though possessed of personal courage, he never engaged in war, except when he could not avoid it; and he incessantly laboured to promote the peace and happiness of his subjects. The whole of his subsequent life was employed in rectifying and repairing, by the

the wisdom of his administration, the faults and errors into which he had been led in his youth, by his too great confidence in his favourites and ministers. He died in the forty-sixth year of his age.

A. D. 1670. By his first wife, Alexis left two sons, Theodore and John, and one daughter, the princess Sophia. The children of the second marriage were Peter, and a princess called Natalia. Theodore Alexowitz, who was born in 1657, was eighteen years of age when he ascended the throne of Russia. Possessing all the good qualities of his father, his constitution was unfortunately weak and delicate, and did not promise him a long life. On his accession, he found the empire engaged in a war with the Turks, which he carried on with such ability and vigour, that it was attended with success on his side. A peace was concluded between the two powers, by which the Cossacs, who had put themselves under the protection of the Ottoman court, were given up, and the grand-signior became guarantee of a treaty between the czar and the khan of Tartary, by which the latter engaged to prevent his subjects from making incursions into the Russian provinces.

Theodore had been too much employed in military affairs, since his accession to the throne, to execute the designs he intended for the good of his people. Faithfully attached to the prudent conduct of his father, he invited foreign officers into his country, endeavoured to polish Russia, and to introduce into the empire useful establishments. Thinking it absurd and unjust, that any should pretend to be entitled to great distinction, high honours, and the most important

tant employments of the state, merely on account of birth, and without the least regard to merit, he ordered all the nobles of the empire to attend him, with the charters and privileges of their titles, which, when presented to him, he threw into the fire, and declared that thence forward all honourable or profitable prerogatives should be solely granted to talents and virtue. But laudable as this design might appear, it could not be properly executed. The distinction annexed to birth in some measure seems necessary, in order to preserve a due subordination in the state. The czar, however, followed that principle in disposing of the throne, when he perceived his end approaching. Of his two brothers, John the elder, was of competent age; but his mind was weak, his sight short, and he was subject to epileptic fits; and Theodore considered him as unfit to provide for the necessities of an empire beginning to emerge from barbarism. Having, therefore, a greater regard for the welfare of his country, than for the customs which had hitherto prevailed, he declared Peter his successor, who, notwithstanding his early youth, had showed a taste for the sciences and useful knowledge, and consequently excited a hope, that he might realise projects of utility to Russia.

The princess Sophia, third daughter of the emperor Alexis Michaelowitz by his first wife, leaving her retirement in a convent, to which an ancient law had subjected the female offspring of the czars, had been very assiduous in attending on her brother Theodore, during his illness, and found means to engross a considerable share in the administration of affairs. Her

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genius was extraordinary, and might have been of great service to the state, had it not been accompanied with an unbounded ambition, which excited her to aim at becoming mistress of the empire, by endeavouring to disannul the nomination of Peter, and to substitute in his stead the weak prince John, in whose name she hoped to govern Russia.

Theodore was scarcely dead, when the nomination of a prince, only ten years of age, to be his successor in the throne, the exclusion of the elder brother, and the intrigues of the princess Sophia their sister, occasioned a most dreadful rebellion. Like all other despots, the Russian emperors had formed for themselves a guard exclusively attached to their persons, similar to the janissaries of the grand-signior, and to whom were given the appellation of *strelitzes*. The princess Sophia convened an assembly of the princes of the blood, the generals of the army, the bojars, the bishops, and the principal merchants, to whom she represented, that, by right of seniority and merit, the empire ought to devolve to John; and, upon quitting the convention, she promised the strelitzes an increase of pay, and made them some valuable presents. She also caused a report to be privately circulated, that Alexis had been compelled to prefer the younger to the elder brother by a faction, who, after having extorted from him that nomination, had poisoned him to prevent his retracting it.

At length Sophia furnished the strelitzes with a list of forty obnoxious persons, at the head of which was the name of Von Gaden, who had been physician to the emperor Theodore. All the others

others were nobles, enemies, it was said, to their corps and to the state, and, therefore, meriting death. Those incensed soldiers hurried to the palace and through the city in quest of their destined victims. Von Gaden, it was reported, had administered poison to the late emperor, and was, therefore, the particular object of their resentment. In their search for him, they met a young man of the same profession, whom they seized, saying, "You are a physician, and if you did not poison our master Theodore, you have poisoned others, and therefore deserve death:" and having thus spoken they killed him. At length, they discoverd Von Gaden, who had disguised himself in a beggar's habit, and dragged him to the palace: the princesses, by whom he was beloved, and who reposed some confidence in his skill, implored pardon for him on their knees, and assured the strelitzes, that he was an able physician, and had taken great care of their brother Theodore. The soldiers replied, that he deserved to die, not only as a physician, but also as a sorcerer; because a dried toad and a great snake had been found in his house. The revolters then appointed a tribunal, of which only one member could write, and which condemned him to suffer death. The same judges, in like manner, passed sentence upon the accused nobles, whom they executed by cutting them in pieces with their sabres. While these miscreants thus glutted their fury in the presence of the princesses, others laid violent hands on those that were odious to them, or obnoxious to Sophia.

These acts of cruelty terminated with proclaiming the two princes, John and Peter, joint sovereigns, and associating A. D. 1682.

their sister Sophia in the government, as co-regent. She then approved of all the crimes of which the strelitzes had been guilty, rewarded their services with the forfeited estates of their victims, and permitted them to erect a monument, on which were inscribed the names of the persons that had been put to death, and who were represented as traitors to their country. Finally, she granted them letters patent, expressive of her thanks for their zeal and fidelity.

Sophia married John to a young lady of the house of Soltikoff, in order that if they had issue Peter might lose for ever the hopes of retaining the crown. The imbecility of the elder brother, and the youth of Peter, allowed Sophia to enjoy all the honours of sovereignty: her bust appeared on the public coin; she signed all dispatches; and possessed the first seat in the council, and a power without controul. The czar Peter, who was now in his eighteenth year, married a lady contrary to the inclinations of his sister. Sophia, therefore, formed a design against the life of her brother, Peter. Having concerted her measures, she made choice of the president of the strelitzes to execute this bloody deed. The czar Peter was at that time at Obrozensko, a country seat three miles distant from Moscow. To this place, the president and six hundred strelizes immediately repaired; but the latter, struck with horror at the thought of shedding the blood of their prince, privately informed the czar of his danger. Peter had only time to escape to the convent of the Trinity, which was also a palace and a fortress; and had he remained an hour longer at Obrozensko, he would have been dethroned, and perhaps murdered.

Peter

Peter then summoned the bojars to attend him at the convent, ordered troops to be raised in every town, and having published an account of the attempt made against his life, was visited by a numerous body of noblemen and gentlemen. Sophia endeavoured to engage the strelitzes to espouse her cause; but they, notwithstanding her injunctions to the contrary, marched directly to the convent, and assured the czar of their fidelity to his person and government. She was afterwards arrested; and her partisans were taken and punished with death. When the executions of the conspirators were terminated, Peter ordered Sophia to be imprisoned and deprived of all authority. Thus ended the regency of that princess, who governed the Russian Empire during several years; but endeavouring to engross the whole power, she lost both her authority and liberty, and was confined in a convent till the time of her death, which happened fifteen years after this transaction. Some efforts were indeed made by her partisans to reinstate her in her former situation; but they proved vain and ineffectual.

Peter returned to Moscow, and made his public entry into that city on horseback, attended by a guard of eighteen thousand strelitzes, and accompanied by his wife and mother. The czar, John, who had not been concerned in the late transactions, affectionately received him at the palace gate; and the two brothers embraced each other. From that time, Peter is to be considered as sole sovereign; since, from the period of this revolution to the year 1696, in which John died, the latter led a private and retired life, and scarcely took any farA. D. 1690.

ther part in the governing of the empire, than that of signing his name to the public edicts.

If we would duly appreciate the actions of Peter I. we ought to consider the condition of Russia, when he commenced his reign. It was slavishly observant of ancient usages, most of them barbarous and stupid, but so fondly cherished by the nation, that the task of reform appeared almost hopeless. Some of the czar's predecessors, however, had endeavoured to disseminate knowledge through the empire; and we have before seen, that, by persevering efforts, one of them had procured learned men and artists, civil and military preceptors. But though exhortations and favours were unsparingly employed, neither that prince, nor his successors, could produce much effect on their subjects. Peter, however, determined to try another mode of experiment: he set out in the retinue of an embassy, which he sent to visit several courts. He held no rank in the ambassadorial train; but it was well known that he was the Russian monarch. At one time a sovereign, at another time a private individual, he now conferred with kings, and now mingled in the company of artisans. Motives of curiosity have sometimes induced monarchs to travel, and to handle the tools of workmen for their pleasure and amusement; but Peter alone sought to render them familiar to him by practice, in order that he might be able to estimate and direct those persons, whom he should send to instruct his subjects.

What a striking spectacle must it have been to behold the czar, at the age of twenty-five, quitting the luxury of a court, condemning himself to a life of toil, and by his courage and perseverance,

perseverance, surmounting every delicacy and every repugnance! in consequence of an accident which had befallen him in his early years, he dreaded water so much, that, on being obliged to cross even a rivulet, he was seized with a cold sweat and convulsions. In order, therefore, to conquer nature, he plunged into a river, and that element, which had hitherto been the object of his aversion, became one of the principal theatres of his triumphs.

Peter having arrived at Amsterdam, disguised himself, repaired to the dock-yard of Saardam, and enrolled himself among the ship-carpenters. He was astonished at the multitude of workmen constantly employed; the order and exactness observed in their several departments; the great dispatch with which they built and fitted out vessels; and the incredible quantity of stores for the ease and security of labour. Clad and fed like the rest of the carpenters, the czar worked in the forges, the rope-walks, and the mills. From the construction of a boat, he proceeded to that of a sixty-gun ship, which was begun by himself, and finished with his own hands, and which he sent to Archangel. These occupations did not prevent him from attending the lectures on anatomy, surgery, mechanics, and other branches of practical philosophy cultivated in Holland. From Amsterdam he sailed to England, where he followed the same manner of life as in Holland. The Dutch carpenters had taught him the practical part of ship-building; but the English instructed him in the fundamental principles of the art. In short, nothing escaped the notice of this prince: his attention was directed to astronomy, arithmetic, watch-

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making, and hydraulics. Wishing to introduce every species of knowledge into his dominions, he sent into Russia a colony of between six and seven hundred ingenious men, in the several arts and professions.

The measures which the czar had taken on leaving his dominions, produced the best effect; and whilst in the character of a ship-wright, he was handling the axe and the saw at Saardam, his troops gained successive victories over the Turks and Tartars on the frontiers of Russia. These troops, indeed, had been formed by himself: their exercises, their discipline, had constituted, as it were, the amusements of his boyish days. Scarcely was Peter sufficiently able to carry a musquet, when he assembled around him a number of youths of his own age, in whose company he accustomed himself to martial manœuvres. He made them pass, and he passed himself, through the different military grades. That corps increased in number, and swelled to an army, remarkable for courage and bravery, and of which every individual was personally known to the czar.

In order to teach the young bojars proper subordination, with which they were hitherto unacquainted, he successively occupied the stations of drummer, corporal, serjeant, lieutenant, and captain, while the commands were given and executed in the name of Le Fort, a Piedmontese gentleman, who had become the favourite of Peter, and had proved himself worthy of his confidence. Le Fort had not been instructed in military knowledge, nor was he a man of literature, having never applied to any particular art or science; but, like the czar, he was indebted

debted for every thing to his own genius. He became a general, took cities, and won battles. In the midst of these military exercises, Peter did not neglect the navy; and as he had made Le Fort a general, though he had never borne any commission by land, so he raised him to the rank of admiral, though he had never before commanded at sea. The czar passed also through the various grades in the naval service. His example was a powerful stimulus to the Russian nobility, who disdained not the lowest ranks in the militia, when they saw that the emperor, instead of viewing them with contempt, beheld them with pride and complacency.

After a successful campaign against the Turks and Tartars, Peter, wishing to accustom his people to glory as well as to military toil, marched his army into Moscow under triumphal arches, embellished with pompous decorations, and accompanied with illuminations and fire-works. The soldiers who had fought on board Venetian vessels against the Turks, moved first in procession. The generals, admiral Le Fort, and the other officers, took the precedency of their sovereign, who, in order to demonstrate to the nobility by his own example, that merit ought to be the only road to military preferment, declared he had no rank in the army. The bustle and joy of this ceremony being terminated, public rewards were distributed to the brave, and punishments inflicted on the cowards.

By order of the czar, the troops had already changed their long garb, and now wore a short dress, which was lighter and better suited to their movements. In order to naturalize these innovations

innovations among his subjects, he determined to send a number of the young nobility of his empire to travel, as he had done, into foreign countries, where they might acquire knowledge, and adopt the manners of other nations. Convinced, likewise, that politeness or civilization cannot be introduced or preserved without the intercourse of the two sexes, the czar established assemblies, at which himself appeared in person, and to which he invited ladies and their daughters, who dressed after the manner of the southern nations of Europe; and for these entertainments he published regulations. He encouraged the emulation of dress, dancing, moderate play, and decent familiarity. Thus gradually and imperceptibly did Peter change the Russian *costume*. The long robe was worn by many nations, on account of its requiring less fashion and art; and for the same reason, it was usual among the people to suffer their beards to grow to an enormous length. The czar found no difficulty in introducing the French mode of dress, and the custom of shaving, among his courtiers; but the people were more stubborn, and he was under the necessity of imposing a tax on long robes and beards. The ancient gravity, which was tinctured with a gloom of melancholy, gave way to an easiness of manner, that was the precursor of gaiety.

The reformation of the church, which in many countries is considered as a difficult and dangerous attempt, was accomplished by Peter with great facility. The patriarchs had sometimes contested the imperial authority; and the bishops had arrogated to themselves the power of condemning to death, and other corporeal punishments,

nishments, contrary to the spirit of religion, and to the subordination of government. The czar, therefore, deprived the clergy of their authority, and entirely abolished the dignity of the patriarch. Considering that, as his dominions were ill peopled, the celibacy of the monks was contrary to nature and to the public good, a multitude of cloistered young men and women, who made a vow to retire from the world and its services, appeared to him a dangerous institution. He therefore ordained, that none should be admitted to a monastic life, till the age of fifty; and he prohibited every one invested with a public employment from entering a convent. In Russia marriages had hitherto been performed after the custom of Turkey and Persia, where the parties do not see each other till the contract is signed. That ridiculous custom the czar abolished. Notwithstanding the repugnance of the church, he obliged the nation to adopt the Roman calendar, and introduced the common arithmetical figures into the exchequer and public offices, from whence they made their way into the compting houses of merchants. The chief part, however, of these improvements did not take place till after Peter had quitted the united provinces.

Having seen the English fleet, and the dock-yards in Holland, he wished also to observe the military discipline of the Germans, and therefore proceeded to Vienna, where he had an interview with the emperor Leopold, who was the natural ally of the Russians against the Turks. Peter was ready to depart from Vienna, in order to repair to Venice, when he received information that a rebellion had broken out in

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his dominions. This insurrection had been excited partly by the old bojars, who were strongly attached to their ancient customs, and partly by the clergy, who considered all Peter's innovations as so many acts of sacrilege. It may also be supposed that the princess Sophia, who was immured in a convent, was not wholly unconcerned in this transaction, since the rebels declared they would place her on the throne, instead of a prince, who, under pretence of polishing his kingdom, delivered it into the hands of foreigners, and placed them at the head of every department of the administration.

Superstition, which sheds its baneful influence over the world, and is held in reverence by the vulgar, was soon diffused from the common people of Russia to the strelitzes, whom Peter, previously to the commencement of his journey, had dispersed into the frontier posts, sufficiently remote from each other, in order to prevent their junction. They knew that their former conduct had excited the indignation of the czar, and that he would at some earlier or more distant period find means to destroy their body. Under this idea they quitted their garrisons, assembled to the number of ten thousand, and set out on their march to Moscow, to gain, as they pretended, certain information whether the czar was alive or dead. The regency demonstrated to them the falsity of that rumour; and endeavoured by intreaties and menaces to induce them to return to their duty, and to reoccupy their former posts: but the strelitzes obstinately persisted in their design, and continued to advance. Their approach excited the greatest consternation in Moscow. An engage-

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ment was now inevitable: the action was bloody and obstinately contested, and the strelitzes being defeated, laid down their arms.

The czar arrived in the capital of his dominions, before it was known that he had quitted Germany. He inflicted a dreadful punishment on the leaders of the revolt; the rest of the strelitzes were drafted into different regiments; the corps was entirely suppressed; and their name abolished. He confided the care of his person to the cadets, whom he had himself reared and disciplined.

These transactions were followed by a war against Sweden, which was at that time governed by the celebrated Charles XII. A D. 1700. The Russian army having penetrated into Ingria, laid siege to the citadel of Narva; but being attacked by the Swedish monarch with a very inferior number of troops, the Russians were entirely defeated, and compelled to retire. Peter, however, was not prevented by this war from attending to the plans which he had formed for the welfare of his kingdom. Having captured Nyenschantz, a fortress at the mouth of the Neva, he laid the foundation of St. Petersburgh, which was destined to rival the city of Moscow, and which the residence of the sovereign has since rendered the capital of the empire. He laboured to unite the Caspian and the Black sea, by means of a communication between the Don and the Wolga. He covered his plains with beautiful cattle, which, together with their herdsmen, he brought from Saxony. He erected manufactories for cloth, linen and paper; opened the mines of Siberia; invited and protected smiths, braziers, armourers, founders, and artisans

sans of every kind; and established printing-offices, public schools, and hospitals.

In the mean time, Charles, who had compelled Augustus, king of Poland, to resign his crown, not only obliged the troops of Peter to evacuate Lithuania, but penetrated into the provinces of the Russian empire. Invited by the hetman of the Cossacs, who promised to revolt from the czar and to join his army, the Swedish monarch was induced to proceed to the Ukraine, where his situation became extremely critical and dangerous. Charles, however, laid siege to Pultowa, a strong city in that province; but being attacked by the czar with a numerous and powerful army, his troops were entirely defeated, and himself obliged to seek safety in flight. A. D. 1707.

Charles having fled to Constantinople, interested the divan in his behalf, who considered him as an unfortunate hero, and resolved to assist him. Peter suddenly beheld himself menaced by an unexpected foe, and was obliged to have recourse to means of defence. But he imprudently advanced too far into the enemy's country; and having arrived at Yassy in Moldavia, experienced a want of provisions, and found himself completely surrounded on the Pruth by the Turks, who amounted to upwards of two hundred thousand men, whilst the Russian army did not consist of more than twenty thousand troops. Reduced to desperation, the czar sat in his tent, and beheld at once his labours destroyed, his hopes defeated, and himself more unfortunate than the Swedish monarch at Pultowa.

For the safety of his army and of himself, the czar was indebted to Catharine, who was then his

his mistress. That woman, who afterwards became so renowned, was unacquainted with her father, and scarcely knew either her mother or the place of her birth. In her fourteenth year she married a dragoon of the Swedish garrison of Marienburgh, at the capture of which by the Russians, she was taken prisoner, and employed in the general's kitchen, where, by her mental powers and her personal graces, she won the affections of her master. From thence she passed into the family of prince Menzikoff, who was not less struck with her attractions, and with whom she continued till she became the mistress of the czar. Peter having accidentally met her at the house of the prince, was pleased with her turn of mind, and gained possession of her person. By assiduity and attention, by the softness and complacency of her manners, and by a temper singularly gay and chearful, Catharine acquired an absolute sway over the mind of the emperor. She calmed his impetuosity, consoled him in his anxieties, and watched over his health.

She had attended him in his campaign against the Turks. Peter, reduced to desperation, had determined to cut his way through the enemy during the darkness of the night; and after giving positive orders that no one should approach him on pain of death, retired to his tent in great agony. The principal officers assembled at this important crisis, in the presence of Catharine, and drew up certain preliminaries, in order to obtain a truce from the enemy. Without the knowledge of Peter, plenipotentiaries were dispatched to the grand-vizier, with whom a peace was concluded, on conditions more moderate than

in so desperate a situation could have been reasonably expected. Catharine, who had charged herself with the office of prevailing on the emperor to ratify what had been done, ventured to enter his tent, where her efforts were crowned with success. On this occasion she obtained great popularity, and her wise and prudent conduct preserved the czar and his army from certain destruction.

A. D. 1724. This meritorious service induced Peter to give her his hand, and to place on her head the imperial diadem.

Previously to this last transaction, a peace had been concluded between Russia and Sweden, which ceded to the czar Livonia, Esthonia, Ingria, and parts of Carelia and Finland. On occasion of this treaty, so glorious to the empire, great festivities were appointed, and the senate and synod offered to Peter, the conqueror of the Baltic, to exchange the title of czar for that of emperor and autocrat of all the Russias, to which was annexed the honourable surname of the Great.

Peter, however, after all his noble institutions and his liberal attempts to civilize his people, was himself no better than an enlightened barbarian. Inventive, bold, active, and indefatigable, he was formed for conceiving the most magnificent, and for executing the most difficult and daring designs; but unfeeling, impatient, furious under the influence of passion, and a slave to his own arbitrary will, he was shamefully prodigal of the lives of his subjects, and did not endeavour to combine their ease and happiness with his glory and personal greatness. His savage ferocity and despotic rigour was exercised against Alexis, his only son by his first wife, who, having led an abandoned course of life, and discovered

covered an inclination to obstruct the czar's favourite plan of civilization, was compelled by his father to sign in 1718, a solemn renunciation of his right to the crown. But lest that deed should not prove sufficient to exclude the czarowitz from the succession, Peter assembled an extraordinary court, composed of the principal nobility and clergy, who condemned that unfortunate, though seemingly weak and disolute prince, to suffer death, without prescribing the manner in which it should be inflicted.

Alexis was seized with strong convulsions, and expired soon after the dreadful sentence was announced to him; but whether in consequence of the agony occasioned by such alarming intelligence, or by other means, is uncertain. It is only known, that Peter then had, by his beloved Catharine, an infant son, who bore his own name, and whom he designed for his successor; and as it is probable, that the birth of this son had accelerated the prosecution, and increased the severity of the proceedings against Alexis, whom his father had before threatened to disinherit, the friends of Catharine might possibly hasten the death of the same prince, in order to avoid the odium of his public execution. But whatever might be the cause of the death of the czarowitz, the young Peter, whom the emperor had ordered all his subjects to acknowledge as lawful heir to the crown, did not long survive him.

A. D. 1725. At the age of fifty-three years died Peter the Great, Catharine purchased the most costly marble, and invited the most able sculptors of Italy to erect a mausoleum for the departed hero. It was adorned

with emblematic devices, inscriptions, and an epitaph, containing in epitome, his entire history. She also caused medals to be struck and copiously to be distributed among the foreign ambassadors, and all the great men in the empire. On one side appeared the bust of Peter the Great; and on the reverse, was the empress with the crown on her head, a globe and a sceptre lying beside her on a table, and before her a sphere, sea-charts, plans, mathematical instruments, arms, and a caduceus. In the background an edifice rises on the shore; and an arsenal is discovered with a ship at sea. In clouds above, supported by Immortality, appears the defunct emperor, who exhibits these treasures to Catharine, and says to her, "Behold what I "have left to you."

On the decease of Peter the Great, Catharine ascended the throne of Russia, and, from the commencement of her reign, conducted herself with the greatest benignity and gentleness, and by that means secured the love and veneration of her subjects. She had borne to the late czar several children, of whom two daughters survived him, and have obtained a place in history; Anne and Elizabeth Petrowna. It is pronouncing her eulogy, when we say, that during her administration it could not be perceived that the head of the empire had been changed. The genius of Peter the Great, as if it had been infused into her soul, still continued to direct the government, and to watch over the glory of the empire. Her indefatigable zeal for the welfare of her subjects, as well as her gratitude, prompted her to pursue with undeviating exactitude the plan which Peter had formed for the civiliz-

ation of his people. During her reign, the empire enjoyed the blessings of peace.

In compliance with the wish expressed by her husband in his last moments, she married her eldest daughter, Anne Petrowna, to the duke of Holstein; and the fruit of this marriage was that unfortunate prince, afterwards Peter III. Of the young son of Alexis, who was at that time the only remaining male of the blood of the czars, Catharine took peculiar care; and, with the view of opening to him the avenue to the throne, declared him grand duke of Russia. She presided at the first session of the academy of Petersburgh, to which Peter had not had time to give the finishing form. She died at the age of thirty-eight, two years after the death of her husband.

Previously to her decease, Catharine had been prevailed on to make her will and settle the succession. Accordingly she left the throne to Peter II. son of Alexis, under the direction of a council of regency, at the head of which was prince Menzikoff, who, like herself, was a striking instance of the caprice of fortune. When a boy he cried pastry about the streets, and having obtained information of a conspiracy that was formed against the czar, he made known his intelligence to Peter the Great, who took him to court, where the young pie-seller proved himself fit for various employments, and rose from one grade to another till he attained that of general, all the while enjoying the confidence and friendship of his imperial master. It was at his house that Peter I. saw Catharine, who recollected her former attachment to Menzikoff, and intrusted him with A. D. 1727.

with the chief management in the guardianship of her successor. She had even mentioned in her will that she wished Peter II. to espouse the daughter of Menzikoff. The young prince, however, instead of following the advice of the late empress, gave ear to the suggestions of that minister's enemies, despoiled him of all his property, and banished him, with his whole family, to the remote extremity of Siberia.

Peter II. was extremely beloved by his people. Russia has since termed his reign its happiest period during a hundred years. No war destroyed the population, and wasted the money of the empire. Every one peaceably and securely enjoyed what belonged to him. After his accession to the throne, he wrote to his sister, that "God having called him to the government of so extensive an empire, he would endeavour to perform his duty by ruling his people in righteousness and in the fear of the Almighty, by hearkening to the complaints of the poor and the oppressed, and, imitating the laudable example of Vespasian, who would suffer no man to go sorrowful away." What happiness would have redounded to Russia, had this emperor always thought and acted in this manner, and attained an extreme old age! Peter, however, sickened of the small-pox, of which he died at the age of fifteen. On his death the male race of the family of Romanow became extinct, and with him perished the hope of the nation.

CHAP.

CHAP. V.

From the Extinction of the Male Race of the Family of Romanow, to the Commencement of the nineteenth Century.

ON the decease of Peter II. the council, the senate, the general officers, and other persons of distinction, assembled in order to appoint a successor to the throne, and took no notice of the will of the late empress Catharine. There remained three daughters of the emperor John, Peter's elder brother; Catharine Iwanowna, married to the duke of Mecklenburgh, Anne Iwanowna, relict of the duke of Courland, and Elizabeth who lived at Petersburgh unmarried. From these princesses the council resolved to elect a sovereign, and the choice fell on Anne Iwanowna, who was at liberty to contract a new marriage with some great man of the country, and might produce a native Russian heir to the throne. The nobles, however, designed to change the form of government, which had been hitherto arbitrary and despotic, to diminish the authority of the sovereign, and convert the Russian monarchy into an aristocracy. Anne was accordingly informed of her being elected to the sovereignty, and of the capitulation annexed, by which she became merely the executrix of the resolutions of the council. But she did not hesitate to sign the instrument, and was therefore immediately declared empress of Russia. A. D. 1730.

Anne,

Anne, however, had not been long seated on the throne, before other noble families, who constituted no part of the council, took umbrage at the capitulation, which they considered as injurious to the interest and welfare of the people in general. The empress was, therefore, requested to govern in the same manner as her predecessors, and to unite the council and the senate. Anne was very ready to acquiesce in this petition, which promised to free her from superior controul. She therefore convened the council, and having read the capitulation, tore it in pieces, and declared, that she ascended the throne of her ancestors in virtue of her hereditary right, and not by the election of the nobles.

Peter the Great had extended the confines of the empire on the side of Persia. Anne opened a negotiation with the Shah, and promised to restore to him the conquered countries, provided he would favour and promote the commerce with Russia. Accordingly, the empress made a formal surrender of all her Persian possessions, and the Russian merchants obtained very considerable privileges in the territories of Persia. Anne soon after united her forces to those of Austria, and attacked the territories of the Porte; but the Russians, though every where victorious, after conquering Moldavia, Asoph on the Palus Mœotis, and Oczakow on the Euxine, were glad to purchase peace by restoring the captured places. The war, however, recommenced, and the Russian troops, under the command of marshal Munich, completely routed the Turks near Stavutshiow, took the fortress of Khotyim, crossed the Pruth, made themselves

A. D. 1735.

themselves masters of Yassy, the capital of Moldavia, and compelled the whole of that province to submit to the empress. But Austria having signed a treaty of pacification with the Porte at Belgrade, Russia was also obliged to conclude a peace. After sacrificing, therefore, a great number of men, and expending vast sums of money, a few commercial advantages were all the gain that accrued from these successive years of murderous and desolating war.

Anne is said to have been strongly addicted to gallantry. Her principal favourite was Ernest John Biron, the grand-son of an hostler, and a native of Courland: his father, risen from the lowest station in the stable to the post of chief huntsman, had three sons, to whom he gave a good education. Ernest, who was the eldest, advanced himself at court, and aimed at dignities; but his origin being too notorious, he was rejected by the nobles, with whom he had endeavoured to contract an alliance. Anne made him her chamberlain, and he became her principal favourite, and was created a Russian count. He was afterwards elected duke of Courland, and had that dignity made perpetual in his family. Biron possessed an absolute influence in the government of the Russian empire during the reign of Anne, who prosecuted the Turkish war chiefly at his instigation. The administration was conducted with firmness, but marked with blood, under a princess who was naturally mild and inimical to acts of violence. But the favourite extorted her consent to persecutions carried on against the nobles, many of whom were proscribed and brought to the scaffold. Anne successfully executed many projects intended by Peter

Peter the Great. She died at Petersburgh, after a reign of ten years, A. D. 1740.

Previously to her death, the late empress had declared her niece, Anne of Mecklenburg, grand-duchess, and her niece's son emperor. She was the daughter of that eldest sister, who had been deprived of the throne of Russia, to make room for the elevation of Anne. The princess of Mecklenburg had married prince Anthony Ulric of Brunswick, to whom she had borne a son named Iwan, who soon after his birth was declared by the late empress successor to the throne. This arrangement had been suggested by Biron, who had procured himself to be nominated in her will as regent of the empire, and guardian of the young prince, during his minority. The grand-duchess, Anne, thanked Biron for taking upon himself the weighty cares of the government; but the conduct of the regent occasioned great discontents throughout the empire, and duke Ulric perceived that it would be no difficult matter to deprive him of his authority. Accordingly, Biron enjoyed his elevated situation only twenty-two days. With his consort, his family, and his friends, he was taken into custody during the night, and the next morning the princess Anne received the homage of the people as grand-duchess of Russia and guardian of her son, the infant emperor. Biron was afterwards brought to a trial, condemned, and exiled to Siberia.

The princess Anne is said to have been extremely indolent, and wholly engrossed by voluptuous enjoyments. She reposed entire confidence in a female favourite, named Julia Mengden, who acquired and preserved it by a subser-

viency,

viency, which has been the subject of much censure. Count Linar, the Polish envoy, had a familiar access to the princess, and the favourite married the count, in order to afford him an opportunity of entering the palace without suspicion. The public, however, were not to be deceived by this stratagem, as it was known that the grand-duchess, an enemy to all restraint, used to indulge her appetite whenever she thought proper, without regard to places or circumstances. The same heedless indifference rendered her utterly inattentive to the cabals, which were formed around her, and of which she received sufficient information.

The emperor Iwan was a very remote descendant of the house of Romanow, and he seemed rather of German than Russian extraction*. The inconsistent behaviour of the regent, her contempt of the Russian customs, and the exorbitant favours she heaped on her adherents, who were chiefly foreigners, alienated the affections of the people. A new candidate, therefore, appeared for the crown. This aspirant was no other than the princess Elizabeth, daughter of Peter the Great, and aunt to the grand-duchess Anne. On the death of Peter II. she might perhaps have obtained possession of the sceptre of her father, had she made any attempt; but during the reigns of Catharine and Anne she lived in obscurity, and was revered and esteemed for her prudence. It is probable, that the project for ascending the throne of Russia first occurred to Elizabeth on the demise of the late empress.

* Of all his relations, only his great grandfather was descended from the house of Romanow.

Accordingly, having concerted measures with her physician and favourite, Elizabeth repaired to the guards, whom she harangued, and, holding the cross in her hand, informed them, that as the daughter of Peter the Great, whose actions had rendered him immortal, she had resolved to wield the sceptre of her illustrious father. The soldiers, who were easily gained to her purpose, proceeded with her party to the palace inhabited by the emperor and his parents. The duke and his spouse were dragged out of their beds, and conveyed to prison, where they were strongly guarded. Iwan, the innocent and unconscious boy, who, with no ambition to flatter, had been raised to the imperial purple, was without consternation dethroned; and, during this transaction, which doomed him to a life of misery, was sleeping quietly in his cradle. The ducal pair were imprisoned in a fortress, in which they terminated their calamitous career. The unfortunate Iwan was removed from his parents, and shut up in a monastery at Oranienburg, where his mental powers were left totally unemployed, and he was secluded from all society. A monk, however, endeavoured to carry off the dethroned emperor; but the attempt was attended with ruin to himself, and additional horror to the doleful situation of Iwan, who was immured in a dungeon in the castle of Schlussenburg. In this subterranean vault, where the sun never shed its beams, he seemed to be literally buried alive, and passed his time in total inaction by the gloomy light of a lamp. He seldom knew whether it was day or night; the soldiers, who guarded him, were forbidden to discourse with him; and he could scarcely ever obtain

obtain permission to behold for a moment the cheering light of heaven.

A. D. 1741. Elizabeth, having thus obtained possession of the throne of Russia, bent her thoughts to the government of the empire. Under the late regency, the king of Sweden had commenced hostilities against the Russians, in order to regain possession of Finland, Vyburg, and the other provinces ceded by the treaty of Nystadt. The new empress continued the war with vigour, and the Swedish army being surrounded near Helsingfors, and deprived of all means of forcing a passage through the Russian troops, was obliged to capitulate to the enemy. At length the two nations concluded a treaty of peace, by which Russia restored to Sweden the greater part of Finland, on condition that the bishop of Lubeck should be appointed successor to the vacant throne of that kingdom. Thus Elizabeth, in the first years of her reign, enlarged the borders of the empire. She afterwards sent troops into Germany to the assistance of Maria Theresa, by which means the peace of Aix-la-Chapelle was concluded. A. D. 1743.

A passage in the writings of the king of Prussia having given umbrage to the empress, and that monarch having also made some remarks on Elizabeth's manner of life, she became the personal enemy of Frederic, who was suspected of aiming to get possession of Polish-Prussia and Courland. Russia and Austria agreed not only to resist all farther augmentation of the Prussian power, but likewise to use their efforts for reducing it. Frederic, being informed of this combination, A. D. 1753.

determined resolutely to meet his foes, and to anticipate their meditated attack. Accordingly, that monarch having invaded Saxony, Elizabeth took a very active part in the wonderful contest of seven years, which was commenced in behalf of Maria Theresa, and would have been more sensibly, and perhaps, fatally felt by Frederic, had not the grand-duke, whom the empress had appointed her successor, been the friend of the king of Prussia. Elizabeth's orders, which tended to the ruin of Frederic, were not so punctually performed as they ought to have been; and many, who were employed in military affairs, were afraid of injuring the Prussian monarch, that they might gain the approbation of their future sovereign, and acted in conformity with the secret instructions of the grand-duke, without regarding the commands of the empress. A. D. 1756.

Elizabeth tarnished her reign by the institution of a political court of inquisition, under the name of a secret state-chancery, which was empowered to examine into, and punish all expressions of displeasure with the measures of government. This introduced the vilest practices: the lowest and most profligate of the people were employed as spies and informers, who were paid for their denunciations and calumnies, and for aspersing the most virtuous characters. The prisons were frequently insufficient to contain the number of those who were accused of a want of respect for the government.

Elizabeth is reported to have indulged, particularly for a few years preceding her death, in the most unbounded intemperance and sensuality. She also evinced great apprehensions and alarms,

alarms, lest she should suffer a fate similar to that of Anne, and is said to have cursed the memory of those who first conceived the design of dethroning princes. She continued, however, in the undisturbed and tranquil enjoyment of her exalted station, and departed this life after a reign of twenty-one years.

A. D. 1762. On the death of Elizabeth, Charles Peter Ulric, only son of the duke of Holstein, and who assumed the title of Peter III. peaceably ascended the throne of Russia as the declared successor of the late empress. He was grandson to Peter the Great and Catharine I. whose eldest daughter, the princess Anne, had married his father Charles Frederic. If, in ascending the throne of his ancestors, Peter III. met with no opposition, his elevation was beheld with a passive acquiescence, rather than with cheerful attachment: the public was distrustful, the court reserved, and in his own family all was cold. The Russians were averse to foreign masters, and the emperor was a native of Holstein, and had not long been resident in Russia, to the manners of which he was obnoxious. His heart was in Holstein, and the Germans possessed his confidence: to the concerns of the empire, from which he had been kept aloof by his predecessor, he was cold and repugnant. He had disapproved of the participation of Russia in the war against Prussia; he was suspected of a design of new modelling the nation; of using its force for the aggrandisement of Holstein; of dividing himself from his family, and securing his inheritance to a paternal relation.

Whilst grand-duke of Russia, the empress

Elizabeth had given him for a wife Sophia-Augusta princess of Anhalt-Zerbst, who, at her initiation in the Greek religion, and at the ceremony of her coronation, assumed the name of Catharine, was declared grand-duchess of Russia; and it was settled that she should succeed to the throne, if she survived her husband. Great was the contrast which this pair exhibited: the one united grace with majesty in her physiognomy and deportment; whilst the other was ugly and ridiculous in every respect. The grand-duke affected the Prussian habiliments, of which he carried the forms to excess. An enormous hat, whimsically cocked, covered his little, sneering ill-featured face. He was not, however, deficient in genius; but he was void of judgment, and "loved what was great, but "loved it with littleness." Frederic III. king of Prussia, was his hero, or rather his divinity; and he was seen to fall on his knees before the portrait of that monarch, exclaiming, "My "brother! together we will conquer the uni-"verse!"

Several years had elapsed, during which conjugal tenderness, ill-cultivated, had produced no fruit; and Catharine weary of the barren caresses of her husband, procured for herself the gratification of becoming a mother by an intrigue with a young nobleman of her court, whose name was Soltikoff. Elizabeth, being informed of their criminal intercourse, appointed Soltikoff, under the title of envoy-extraordinary, to repair to Stockholm, and notify to the king of Sweden the birth of Paul Petrowitz, of whom the grand-duchess had been recently delivered. Catharine, feeling for her separa-

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tion from the object of her choice, prepared to exert, with the empress, her talents and interest in favour of her exiled lover. But finding her efforts vain and useless, she provided herself with another paramour, Stanislaus Poniatowski, a Polish nobleman, whom the British ambassador to Russia had introduced, and who was afterwards raised to the throne of Poland. The grand-duchess being pleased with him at a secret interview, to which she repaired in disguise, it was agreed, that, for the purpose of guarding against unforeseen accidents, and of securing him from personal danger by the privilege of inviolability derived from the law of nations, Poniatowski should go back to Poland, and return vested with the dignity of an ambassador.

This precaution was not useless, for being surprized by the grand-duke himself in the very act of furtively entering the chamber of Catharine, the privileges of his public character saved him from the first emotions of fury; and Peter suffered Poniatowski to escape, and contented himself with obtaining his recal to Poland. This was a heart-felt stroke to Catharine, who endeavoured, but in vain, to obtain a revocation of the doom, by which her paramour was to be torn from her. However indulgent Elizabeth might be to her own weaknesses, she would not venture to leave in her family a germ of discord, which might be productive of disastrous consequences.

The grand-duchess now lived at court as in a desert, and had no visible connections, except with young women, who, like herself, had been enamoured of Polish gentlemen. During this period, she laid the foundations of her subsequent

quent greatness. Then it was, that she secured for herself friends against the hour of need; that all the men of importance were persuaded, by the secret connections which she formed with them, that they would become still more important, if she obtained possession of the government; that, while under the cloak of a great but unfortunate passion, she enjoyed some consolatory private adventures, several of them were fully authorised to suppose that they should fill the rank of favourites at her court.

Such was the situation of Catharine, when the empress Elizabeth died, and the grand-duke assumed the imperial sceptre. In the proclamation which announced this event to the empire, Peter made no mention of Catharine or her son, an omission that to some appeared to presage the overthrow of the lineal succession: neither was there any preparation for the coronation at Moscow; a solemnity, rendered, by its usage and antiquity, highly impressive to the Russians. Some of the first measures of the emperor, however, were popular and auspicious: to the Russian nobility and gentry he gave freedom; he recalled the state-prisoners, with which jealousy and despotism had peopled Siberia; he abolished the inquisition, that dreadful tribunal, the insult of reason, and the scourge of humanity; he exercised his kindness on all who had been attached to Elizabeth; and he forgave his enemies, and continued in their post every great officer of state. In a word, reflection succeeded to passion; to fury and violence, gentleness and humanity; and as if enlightened by the importance of his station, he shewed himself in an instant patient, rational, and just. The administration

ministration of justice, the forms of jurisprudence, commerce, the sciences and arts, became alternately the objects of royal attention; Peter visited the colleges, assisted at their deliberations, and animated them by encouragement and reward. He gave audience to every one, received the petitions of the people, administered personal justice, and laboured to obtain the confidence of the nation, and to conquer their prejudices.

But unfortunately the czar was deficient in the strength and firmness of character, indispensable to the ruler of a great nation, and mingled with his best plans, and most popular measures, frivolous appendages, or a pernicious weakness. By waging war against the church, and diminishing its vast possessions, he irritated, in a superstitious and barbarous nation, a powerful and formidable race of men. Suspected of Lutheranism, his retrenchment of the privileges of the church, however exorbitant, was construed into contempt for the established religion. His preference of the German soldiers disgusted the Russian troops; he disbanded the noble guards by whom Elizabeth had been seated on the throne; and deprived the horse-guards of their office, substituting Holsteiners in their place. The introduction of the Prussian exercise, which was yet to be learned, could not fail to displease the army. To these the czar added other causes of military disgust, by which the troops were angered and alienated.

Soon after his accession to the throne, Peter concluded a separate peace with the court of Berlin, and declared himself the friend and ally of the king of Prussia, whom he ordered his troops

troops to join, and to act under that monarch's immediate orders. Another circumstance also, by which he incurred the displeasure of his people was his projected campaign against the Danes, from whom he determined to wrest the territory of Sleswick, which Denmark had entirely appropriated, and which formerly belonged to the duchy of Holstein. "I will get "possession," said he, "of the heritage of my "fathers; it is of more value to me than half of "the Russian empire."

In the mean time, it was said that the emperor entertained the design of declaring prince Iwan his successor, whom he had caused to be brought to a fortress not far distant from Petersburgh, where he had visited him: that he was inclined to disown the young grand-duke, Paul Petrowitz, as his son; and that he intended to immure Catharine for life in an edifice, which he had given orders to be erected, and to substitute in her place his mistress, the countess of Woruntzoff. Catharine was informed of her husband's designs against her, and meditated the dethronement of Peter. Seated on the throne, she became the invisible, but powerful, principal of the factions formed against the czar. Since the dismission of Poniatowski, she had carried on a criminal intercourse with Gregory Orloff, who became an active and zealous member of the conspiracy, and by whose means, his brothers, several officers, and some companies of the guards, were, without understanding the extent of the project, won over to give it their support. The licentiousness of Catharine, however odious and insatiable, was not confined to Orloff; but she knew how to distinguish talents

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and firmness, and in whom to confide her daring plans. To the conspiracy of Bestucheff, supported by his nephew the prince of Wolskonsky, united with count Panin, another was added, of which the princess Dashkoff, a girl only of eighteen years of age, was the most active and spirited member. Of these factions, who acted in unison, though without the cognizance of each other, Catharine was the animating spirit.

It was at first intended to declare Peter to have forfeited the crown by his absence, when he had joined his army and marched against the Danes; but this plan being attended with difficulties, and one of the conspirators having been arrested, they suddenly adopted a different resolution, and appointed the ninth of July as the day for carrying their design into execution. Catharine, ignorant of what had been determined by her friends, and lulled in a profound sleep, found herself roused at two in the morning by a soldier who was a stranger, and who stood by her bed-side: "Your "Majesty," said he, "has not a moment to "lose; arise, get ready, and follow me." Having thus spoken, he instantly disappeared; and the empress, astonished and terrified, called her favourite woman. Having dressed and disguised themselves so as to be unknown to the centinels, the soldier returned, and led them to a carriage which waited for them. A. D. 1762.

Orloff, the favourite, came to meet her at some distance from Petersburgh, and crying out "Every thing is ready," went on before her. Catharine, nearly exhausted by anxiety and fatigue, yet commanding herself enough to assume a sedate and tranquil air, reached the city

at seven in the morning. On her arrival at the barracks, thirty soldiers, half-dressed, ran out to receive the empress with shouts of joy. Alarmed at the smallness of their number, she hesitated for a moment, and at length assured them, in a tremulous voice, "That her death, "together with that of her son, had been de- "creed by the czar that very night; that flight "had been her only means of escape; and that "her confidence in their attachment had in- "duced her to solicit their assistance, and to "put herself into their hands!" Her auditors trembled with indignation, and swore to die in her defence. A crucifix was fetched, on which she administered to the soldiers the oath of allegiance; and, before eleven in the morning, saw herself surrounded by above two thousand troops, who loudly shouted "Long live the em- "press Catharine!" She then repaired to the church of Kasan, where the archbishop of Novogorod placed on her head the imperial throne, and, in a loud voice, proclaimed her under the name of Catharine II. sovereign of all the Russias; declaring at the same time the young grand-duke, Paul Petrowitz, to be her successor. A *Te Deum* was then chanted; and the empress having proceeded to the palace, administered to the people the oath of allegiance.

A rumour was on a sudden spread through the multitude, that Peter III. was no more, and that the procession, with his body, was then passing. Several soldiers, covered with long black cloaks, and bearing torches in their hands, appeared on each side of a coffin, over which hung a pall, preceded by priests, who chanted litanies as the procession moved forward, while the crowd fell back

back respectfully on either side. This mock tragedy was a stratagem of the conspirators for deceiving the people, and appalling the friends of the czar.

Catharine arrayed herself in the uniform of the guards, decorated with the insignia of the order of St. Andrew, and mounted on horse-back, rode through the ranks of the soldiers, accompanied by the princess Dashkoff, who was similarly apparelled. Before the close of the day, she was in possession of fifteen thousand choice troops: the city was in a state of defence, order prevailed, and no blood had been shed. The soldiers supplied with beer and brandy, expressed their satisfaction in the presence of their sovereign, by reiterated shouts and other marks of vociferous joy, and commenced their march against the czar.

Peter, who had for some time resided at his favourite seat, the imperial country palace of Oranienbaum, set out on the tenth of July, with his sportive train for Peterhoff, where he intended to pass some days in pleasurable enjoyments, previously to his departure for the army. On the journey thither, he received an express from Peterhoff, which informed him that the empress had disappeared from thence. He nevertheless proceeded to the country seat, where a messenger, who had escaped from Petersburgh, in spite of the precautions used to prevent all egress, gave him some imperfect intelligence of the revolution. Others successively arrived, who confirmed the report; and soon the czar was assured, that the empress was marching against him at the head of an army. Immediately consternation pervaded his whole

company. The emperor, perplexed and confounded, ordered, countermanded, asked advice, adopted, and again rejected it.

The plan suggested by general Munich seemed the best suited to the czar's present circumstances. "Instantly proceed," said that venerable officer, "to obtain possession of the division of the fleet "stationed at Cronstadt, which will carry you to "Revel, and from thence to Holstein, where your "army awaits you, with which you may return "to combat your rebellious wife." After some time wasted in discussion, Peter approved this advice, embarked his whole suite on board two yachts, sailed down the river, and appeared before Cronstadt. He was, however, too late: the garrison, who had been gained over by an emissary that had used greater speed than the czar, refused to admit him, and compelled him to retire. Munich again advised him to proceed to Revel: but the company with one accord cried out, that they had not a sufficient number of rowers. "Well, then," said the brave general, "we will all row with them."

The timid or treacherous court still shrunk, and joined to assure the czar, that he had magnified the danger; that Catharine was only desirous of coming to an accommodation; and that to negociate would be safer than to resist. Peter yielded to remonstrances which flattered his imbecility, and ordered the pilot to steer for Oranienbaum. From thence he wrote to the empress, and, in a letter full of humiliation and abasement, assured her, that he would resign, undisputed, the imperial crown; and that he asked only a pension, and liberty to retire to Holstein. To this address no answer was vouchsafed;

safed; and Peter, convinced that he had no resource remaining, set out with his mistress and aide-de-camp to meet Catharine at the castle of Peterhoff.

The czar vainly expected to move, by submission, the heart of a woman, who was utterly devoid of pity or compassion. As the carriage passed through the army, the reiterated cry of "Long live Catharine!" completely sunk his desponding spirits. On his arrival at the castle, the few courtiers who had followed him were pushed aside, and his mistress was carried off. The unhappy Peter, led up the grand staircase, was commanded to undress himself. He took off his coat, threw down his sword, divested himself of the badges of his dignity, and remained in his shirt, exposed to the mockery of the soldiers. An old morning gown being, at length, thrown over him, he was shut up in a room of the palace, when count Panin visited the fallen monarch, and, by means of promises calculated to ensnare the credulous prince, seduced him to write and sign the following declaration:

"During the short space of my absolute reign "over the empire of Russia, I became sensible "of my incapacity to sustain so heavy a bur- "then, and of the disproportion of my abilities "to the task of governing a great empire, ei- "ther as its sovereign, or in any other capacity. "I foresaw also the troubles that must thence "have arisen; troubles that would have been "followed by the ruin of the empire, and by "my own eternal disgrace. Having seriously "reflected on these things, I declare, without "constraint, that I renounce for ever the go- "vernment of the said empire, in which I de-

" sire not hereafter ever to reign, either as an " absolute sovereign, or under any other form " or title whatsoever; that I have no wish to " aspire thereto, or to employ any means, of " any kind, for such a purpose. As a pledge " of which, I swear sincerely before God and " all the world, to this present renunciation, " written and signed this 29th of June, O. S. " 1762."

After this transaction, the unfortunate czar was removed to Ropscha, a castle six leagues distant from Petersburgh. On the seventh day after his arrival, Alexius Orloff, with an officer named Teploff, brought him news of his speedy deliverance, and asked permission to dine with him. Wine glasses and brandy were, according to custom, brought before the dinner; and while the officer amused the czar with conversation, his companion infused into the glass designed for Peter a poisonous mixture. He swallowed the potion; but feeling the most severe pangs, he refused a second glass which was offered him. Orloff threw him on the ground, and kneeling on his breast, grasped his throat. At that instant prince Baratinsky entered the room. The dying monarch, with the strength of desperation, struggled with the monster who held him down, when a napkin, thrown round his neck by the assistant ruffians, terminated, by suffocation, both his resistance and his life*. Orloff returned immediately to Petersburgh, and repaired to the palace, where the empress being

* This happened on the 17th of July, exactly one week after the revolution: so true is the remark, that between the imprisonment and death of princes the passage is short.

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at table, he presented himself with his hair loose and his dress discomposed, and beckoned to her. She went with him into a closet, staid there a moment, and returned coolly to table. The next day, the death of Peter being announced as the consequence of a "hæmorrhoidal colic," the tender-hearted Catharine rose from her seat, her eyes suffused with tears, and, dismissing the courtiers, retired to her apartment, in which she secluded herself for several days.

The body of the late czar, whose fate cannot be contemplated without the sincerest commiseration, was brought to Petersburgh, and, for three days, exposed, in an open coffin, dressed in the Holstein uniform. His face had become black; his neck exhibited marks of violence and extravasated blood oozed through the epidermis. On the supposition that these circumstances had been foreseen by the conspirators, they were considered as less dangerous than any remaining doubts respecting the reality of Peter's death.

The princess Dashkoff had given the nobles reason to hope, and she herself indeed imagined, that Catharine, on ascending the throne, would establish a senate or council, which should set bounds to her authority; and some were persuaded, that she would only assume the office of regent. Orloff, however, would not suffer any limitations of the power of his sovereign, and explained himself in an imperious tone, which no person dared to contradict. The princess, who had acted so conspicuous a part in the revolution, and whose sentiments were entirely republican, expressed her dissatisfaction at this conduct, and censured the empress's

intimacy with Orloff, which, to her great astonishment, she discovered from some familiarities that passed between them. These observations were not well received by Catharine, who treated her with indifference and neglect, which induced the princess to retire from court.

She loaded Orloff and his brothers with riches and honours, and dignified them with the title of counts. When the former ceased to be the favourite of the woman, he was continued as the minister of the empress. Having, however, aimed at the honour of publicly receiving the hand of Catharine, his pretensions were disdainfully rejected, and he received orders to travel, together with a grant of one hundred thousand rubles in ready money, a pension of fifty thousand, a magnificent service of plate, and an estate containing six thousand peasants.

A. D. 1764. On the death of Augustus III. king of Poland, Catharine, who had signed a treaty of alliance with Prussia, made choice of Stanislaus Poniatowski, her former paramour, to fill the vacant throne. Universal discontent pervaded the Polish nation; but murmurs and resistance, opposed to the Russian arms, were equally vain and useless. The spirit of Poland, however, struggled against the power of Russia; and an action took place in which the Russians were victorious; and Catharine finally succeeded in placing her favourite on the throne.

During the empress's absence at Riga, a conspiracy was formed in favour of prince Iwan, at the head of which was one Mirowitz, who was second lieutenant in the regiment which guarded that unfortunate captive. The conspirators,

rators, during the night, attacked the prison, in which Iwan was confined; but being fired upon by the sentinels, they were compelled to retire. The followers of Mirowitz, surprised at this unexpected resistance, seemed inclined to desist from their enterprize, when their leader drew from his pocket a forged decree of the senate by which Catharine was excluded from the throne, on the pretence of her journey to Livonia to espouse count Poniatowski; and Iwan was, by the same instrument, recalled to the inheritance of his ancestors. Ignorant and credulous, the soldiers gave implicit credit to this report; and having brought from the ramparts a piece of artillery which they pointed at the cell, meditated another attack. The officers within, hearing the formidable preparations, and the orders given to storm the prison, determined to put Iwan to death, in conformity to a mandate they had received from the empress, who had enjoined such a measure, in case of insurrection, and on the presumption that other means were inadequate to the purpose of securing the public tranquillity. Iwan, therefore, was barbarously put to death; and the bleeding body being exposed to the assailants, Mirowitz, struck with horror, mournfully exclaimed, "I have missed my aim; I have no-" thing to do but to die;" and, without attempting his escape, he immediately surrendered himself a prisoner. The mangled remains of the unhappy prince were exposed to the public view; and the misfortunes and personal endowments of this victim of ambition excited the sympathy of the populace, who breathed curses "deep not loud" against his inhuman persecutors.

tors. On this transaction, the public opinion seemed to be divided. It appeared singular and wonderful, that a private individual should hazard an enterprize so rash and so romantic, that no one should suffer injury in the contest, that the death of the object should produce so immediate a calm, and that no enquiry should be made after accomplices. Many believed that the whole affair had been previously concerted by the empress, who had retired from the capital during its execution.

The purposes for which Poniatowsky had been raised to the throne of Poland, began gradually to unfold themselves. Conceiving herself secure in the submission of the monarch whom she had created, she threw off all restraint, and openly avowed her pretensions. Having traced on a map a line of demarcation, by which a great part of the Polish territory had been assigned to Russia, she insisted, in a tone of command, from which there seemed to be no appeal, on the recognition of these limits, and the propriety of her claim. The king and republic were also required to conclude with Russia a treaty of alliance, offensive and defensive, and to allow the dissidents and catholics to enjoy equal rights. The nobles became indignant at these demands. The bishop of Kiow said, "That were his advice taken, they would have "the king hanged, if there were still to be "found among the Poles men sufficiently chari-"table to do the nation that service." The Russian army, which had been gradually advancing, at length surrounded and invested Warsaw; and the prelates and nobles, who had most furiously opposed the emancipation of the dissi-

dissidents, were seized and carried off to Siberia.

The confederates having made application to the Ottoman Porte on behalf of their country, the Russian ambassador was shut up in the prison of the Seven Towers, war was declared, and hostilities were commenced against Russia. Hostilities raged on the frontiers of Turkey with alternate success; but, at length, the advantage appeared manifestly on the side of the Russians. Catharine determined to attack her enemies in the isles of Greece; and, accordingly, two squadrons of Russian men of war sailed from Revel and Archangel, and having crossed the north seas, passed the straits of Gibraltar, and displayed their victorious flag in the Archipelago. In the islands, on Paros and Melos, and on the continent of ancient Greece, Russians appeared: the Pylas of Nestor, the celebrated Sparta, was conquered by barbarians, who besieged Corinth, and captured Lemnos, with Mytelene. In Syria and in Egypt Russian armies were beheld supporting the enterprising Ali Bey against the Turks for three years. A. D. 1768.

Though hopeless of retaining the Grecian islands, the empress resolved to rend them from the Ottoman Porte, to be the patroness of liberty in Greece, and the foundress of a new republic. Between the Russians and Turks a terrible conflict ensued, that terminated in the destruction of the Turkish fleet; which, being linked together, and blocked up in a narrow and slimy bay, became a prey to the devouring flames. Three Englishmen, whose names were Elphinston, Greig, and Dugdale, more particularly distinguished

guished themselves on this occasion. Dugdale, observing the position of the enemy, advanced with his fire-ships, and, in the face of a vigorous fire, encouraging the Russians by his example, himself fastened the grapplings of a fire-ship to a Turkish vessel. This daring purpose being effected, he threw himself into the sea, his hair, face, and hands being scorched, and swam back to the Russian squadron. The rising sun no longer discovered the Turkish fleet. The Russian armament now commanded the Grecian seas; and the incapacity of her generals only prevented Catharine from wresting Syria and Egypt from the Ottoman Porte.

A. D. 1771. Soon after this, a dreadful pestilence ravaged the interior of Russia, and, at length, appeared at Moscow, where the ignorance of the physicians, and the superstition of the people, united to augment its force. The populace perceiving every remedy fail, with blind rage attacked the physicians, whom they pursued on every side, and compelled to conceal themselves. The dead lay without interment in the streets, where they had fallen or been thrown from the houses. Sunk in a deplorable ignorance, the populace contemned alike the regulations of the government, and the medical prescriptions. These miserable wretches believed that prayers to the pictures of the saints were the only method of cure. At length, by the exertions of Gregory Orloff, whom Catharine sent to Moscow for that purpose, the plague, which is supposed to have destroyed 133,290 persons in the Russian empire, entirely disappeared.

About this period, the dismemberment of Poland was effected by Russia, Austria, and Prussia, while the Russian armies continued with various success to ravage the frontiers of Turkey. Dissatisfied with the waste of men and treasure, Catharine replied to the Russian general, who feared to hazard an engagement on account of the number of the Turks, "The Romans enquired only where their enemies were, and not after their numbers." The advantages of the Russians, however, determined the Porte to sue for peace, which was concluded between the two powers. Russia obtained the free navigation of the Ottoman seas, and the passage of the Dardanelles, with the independence of the Crimea, another large tract of territory, and a sum of money for defraying the expences of the war.

Prince Henry of Prussia, commissioned by his brother to confer with the empress on the affairs of Poland, made a visit to Petersburgh; and in a reply, respecting the obstacles which still opposed themselves in that country against the confederate powers, thus expressed himself: —"Madam, there is one sure method of obviating every difficulty; a method which, on the account of Poniatowsky, may perhaps be displeasing to you. Nevertheless, you would do well to adopt the measure, since a compensation more valuable than a tottering throne may be offered to that monarch:—the remainder of Poland must be partitioned." The ambition of Catharine was gratified by the idea, and the annihilation of that unfortunate country was determined. A. D. 1776.

During

During the American war, when England, Holland, France, and Spain, tinged with blood the seas of the two hemispheres, the pride of Catharine was hurt by the English, who paid no respect to the vessels freighted in her ports, and even sometimes stopped those that sailed under her flag. She became, therefore, determined to protect the navigation of the north; a measure to which she was implored by the merchants of Hamburgh, Bremen, and Lubeck. She proposed to the courts of Copenhagen and Stockholm to equip each of them a squadron, which, combined with hers, should defend the neutrality. This confederacy, to which Prussia, Austria, and Portugal, acceded, was intended to be wholly maritime, and confined to the protection of commerce.

Russia had experienced from her conquests on the frontiers of Turkey a rapid increase of commerce: her vessels passed the Dardanelles, proceeded to Aleppo, and Smyrna, and traded in the ports of Italy. On the shores of the Nieper, Catharine had laid the foundation of the city of Cason, which already counted within its walls forty thousand inhabitants, and from whose yards were launched vessels of commerce, and ships of war, destined to strike terror into the Ottoman empire. Desirous of conquering a country, so long the object of her ambitious projects, the empress determined to commence operations by detaching the Crimea from Turkey. Having, therefore, excited an insurrection, the Russian troops, under pretence of assisting the khan, found means to possess themselves of the country. Intimidated by the immense preparations of Catharine for attacking Turkey, the Porte concluded a treaty

A. D. 1783.

with Russia, by which the empress retained the sovereignty of the Crimea, of the isle of Taman, and a great part of the Kuban, while her right was acknowledged to the dominion of the Euxine, and to the passage of the Dardanelles. Thus did Catharine acquire, without the necessity of a battle, an immense territory, and 1,500,000 new subjects. To the Crimea and to the Kuban she restored their ancient names of Taurida and Caucasus.

The vicinity of the Caspian invites the Russians to trade with Persia; by which a commerce with India can easily be prosecuted. Of these advantages they had long profited. In the Caspian, Catharine maintained a fleet, which cruised along the Persian coasts, and burned all the vessels met in those parts. The commanders were instructed to sow discord between the several khans, and to support the weak against the strong. She determined to execute the project formed by Peter I. against Persia, of extending the Russian dominion on the western shores of the Caspian sea. The dissentions which laid waste those fertile regions were favourable to her design, which unforeseen obstacles nevertheless opposed. The Russians, who had carried on a trade in China not less beneficial than that of the Caspian, had received a check by their arrogance and ill-conduct. Catharine appeased the Chinese, revived the spirit of commerce, and sent several young Russians to study the language of China.

The spirit of toleration was a distinguished and singular feature in the administration of Catharine II. who admitted both to civil and military offices persons of all countries and persuasions,

lutherans, calvinists, moravians, papists, mohammedans, and infidels. Not satisfied with having appointed a catholic bishop, the empress established at Mohilef a seminary of jesuits, supported islamism in the Crimea, and gave annually to her people some solemn instances of her protection granted to liberty of conscience. By the orders of Catharine, on the day of the benediction of the waters, her confessor invited [illegible] house the ecclesiastics of every denomination, to whom he gave a grand entertainment, called by the empress "the dinner of toleration," at which have been [illegible] the clergy of eight different forms of worship.

A. D. 1786. A magnificent procession was intended to be made to Kerson and the Crimea, where Catharine was to be declared queen of Taurida, and declared protectress of all the Tartar tribes. It was expected that the adjoining nations, terrified by the power, or allured by the pomp displayed on this occasion, would flock from all parts to do homage to the new sovereign of the east, who would thus be enabled to conduct her grandson Constantine to the gates of that empire, to the sovereignty of which she had destined him from his birth. With this view, Greek nurses had been procured for him. Dressed in the fashion, and surrounded by children of that nation, he had acquired their language, which he learned to speak. The prince, however, sickening of the measles, was obliged to be left behind, and the empress took only a kind of formal possession of Kerson and the Crimea.

The ambition of Catharine had excited the jealousy and the fears of the Turkish empire by the

the designs she entertained respecting her grandson, whose name and education sufficiently denoted her intentions. Her grand object was said to be the establishing in her family two mighty empires, capable of subverting Europe and Asia. The injuries and insults of which the Porte complained, were neither few nor imaginary; and war was accordingly declared A. D. against Russia, whose minister was shut 1787. up in the castle of the Seven Towers. A formidable Turkish army advanced to the shores of the Danube, and the standard of Mohammed was prepared to be unfurled. Catharine, who had impatiently expected the declaration of war, was ready with her fleets and her armies; and Joseph II. emperor of Germany sent eighty thousand Austrians to her assistance; and every thing seemed to announce the ruin of the Ottoman power.

Surrounding nations, however beheld with jealousy the designs of the empress, who threatened to destroy the equilibrium of Europe; and the king of Sweden, incensed at her conduct, and excited by Prussia and England, declared immediate war against Russia, and attacked the town of Frederickshamn. But Gustavus III. who hoped to carry terror to the gates of Petersburgh, had the mortification to discover that no confidence could be placed in his soldiers, that his officers were disaffected, and that a traitorous correspondence was carried on with the enemy. The defection of the Swedes was more than a victory to Catharine, who called upon Denmark for succours, which the court of Copenhagen immediately furnished. Accordingly the Norwegians entered the pro-

vinces of Sweden, and proceeded to lay siege to Gothemburg, when by the spirited conduct of the English and Prussian ministers, a truce was concluded, and the Danish army returned peaceably to Norway.

Gustavus was finally compelled by the superior force of Russia to evacuate Finland. He desisted not, however, from attempts to annoy the enemy; and the Russian and Swedish fleets continued to skirmish with various success. The prince of Nassau, who had with superior numbers given battle to the Swedes, by his unskilfulness suffered an entire defeat. This engagement cost the Russians half their fleet, and more than ten thousand men. This defeat, which went near the heart of Catharine, accelerated a peace; and Gustavus, sensible of his imprudence, and of the disordered state of his affairs, accepted the proposals of the empress.

In the mean time, the Russian forces, estimated at 150,000 men, under the command of Potemkin and count Romantzoff, assisted by prince Repnin, Suwarrow, and other officers, had besieged Oczakow, which was taken by an assault that cost the Russians 12,000 men, while 25,000 Turks perished in the town. This conquest, little less fatal to the victors than to the vanquished, did not abate the ardour of Catharine for the continuance of the war. Respecting Oczakow, the Crimea, the Euxine, and other points of her claim, she remained inflexible. This perseverance had nearly involved Russia in a war with Great Britain and Prussia; an event only prevented by the powerful opposition raised in England against the intentions of the government.

Suwarrow

Suwarrow routed the Turks with a horrible carnage near the river Rimnik, and having captured Tutukay in Bulgaria, wrote to the empress four lines of Russ poetry, which signified—"Glory to God! Praise to Catharine! Tutukay "is taken! Suwarrow is in it!" Town after town submitted to the conquerors; Ismaïl, however, still held out. Potemkin, therefore, sent orders to Suwarrow to take that city within three days. Accordingly the assault was commenced. Twice were the Russians repulsed; but at the third attack, they scaled the ramparts, forced their way into the town, and put to the sword all who opposed them. Fifteen thousand Russians purchased with their lives the bloody laurels of their leader, who wrote to the empress with his usual brevity: "the haughty Ismaïl is at your feet!" Elated with the news of these successive victories, Catharine thus accosted Sir Charles Whitworth, the British embassador, when he next appeared at court, with an ironical smile:—"Since the king, your master, is deter-"mined to drive me out of Petersburgh, I hope "he will allow me to retire to Constantinople:" But Leopold, who had succeeded the emperor Joseph, having concluded a separate peace with the Porte, Catharine began to perceive that her victories were ruinous; and while too proud to sue for a cessation of hostilities, of which she felt the necessity, her armies continued their conquests. At length, however, the preliminaries of peace were signed between Russia and the Porte, and a war was terminated, which cost the former 200,000 men, and two hundred millions of rubles, and the A. D. 1791.

latter 330,000 men, and two hundred millions of piastres.

Catharine had never forgiven Poland the diet of 1788, by which the constitution dictated by force in 1775 was abrogated. The moment of vengeance was now arrived: Bulgakoff, her minister at Warsaw, had orders to declare war against the Poles, who received the declaration not merely with firmness, but with a generous enthusiasm. Catharine, in effecting her purpose, called in negociation to the aid of force, and insisted that Stanislaus Augustus should make a public declaration of the necessity of yielding to the Russian arms. At Grodno, the confederated partisans of Russia assembled; and the Russian minister published a manifesto, declaring the resolution of the empress to incorporate with her domains all the territory of Poland, which her arms had conquered. Stanislaus caballed in favour of Russia, whose troops, strengthened by the Prussians, poured into that unfortunate country. Frederic William, at the head of his forces, fought against Kosciusko, whose talents, courage, and despair, were unavailing against multiplied and increasing numbers. The inhuman Suwarrow captured Prague, where twenty thousand persons satiated with their blood the savage conqueror of Ismaïl, who trampling on the necks of its inhabitants, reeking from the gore of their countrymen, entered Warsaw in triumph. Such are the trophies of despotism; such the triumphs of ambition! The courts of Petersburgh and Berlin divided the remains of this unhappy country; and the courtiers of Catharine shared among them the possessions of the

the proscribed. The pageant monarch, the creature of her power, was sent to Grodno, where he lived in obscurity; and the friends of the brave and generous Kosciusko were, with their general, conveyed to Petersburgh, and immured in dungeons.

The marriage of one of her grand-daughters with the young king of Sweden had become a favourite project with Catharine, who, as a preliminary to this measure, had engaged the prince not to exact of his consort a conformity to the Swedish church, and invited him to visit Petersburgh. Accordingly, the king, attended by the regent his uncle, the minister, and a train of courtiers, repaired to the court of the empress, who entertained them with her accustomed magnificence, and seemed delighted with the young Gustavus. The Swedish monarch appeared affected by the kindness of Catharine; but his sensations became still more interesting in the presence of the young grand-duchess, Alexandra Paulina, who had scarcely completed her fourteenth year, and whose tall and elegant figure, fair complexion, regular features, and modest aspect, made a lively impression; which her innocence, candour, sensibility, and talents, contributed to strengthen. Proposals of marriage were immediately made, and a day was fixed for the espousals. A. D. 1796.

The national pride of Russia was to be flattered by making a queen of Sweden of the Greek church. In the mean time, the appointed day had arrived: the young princess, the empress and her court were assembled; and the bridegroom only was missing. The Russian ministers had purposely withheld the contract and articles

of

of alliance till an hour previously to that appointed for the solemnity. Gustavus, however, perceived and resisted the snare; and declared that no restraint should be imposed on the conscience of the princess; but insisted on an outward conformity to the established laws of Sweden. The court had assembled at seven in the evening, and did not seperate till ten, when all hopes of accommodation had vanished. Catharine sickened at the disappointment and mortification; her speech faultered, and she had a slight fit. All was restraint, gloom, and embarrassment. Gustavus quitted Petersburgh; and the young Alexandra experienced all the bitterness of the first sorrows of love.

Thirsting for conquest, and inured to the din of war, Catharine turned her arms against Persia. Her army penetrated into Daghestan, and laid siege to Derbent; the keys of which were delivered to the general by an old man, who had surrendered that city to Peter I. at the commencement of the century. Having concluded also a new treaty with Austria and Great Britain, the period seemed to her approaching, when she should drive the Ottomans out of Europe, and reign in Constantinople. But having risen on the fifth of November, and transacted business with her secretaries, she was found prostrate on the floor between the two doors leading from the alcove to her closet. She was without sense or motion, and died after continuing thirty-seven hours in that state.

A. D. 1796.

Thus terminated the career of Catharine II. In estimating the character of this extraordinary woman, her reign appears to have been for her people rather brilliant than happy. Within the circle

circle of her influence, her government was moderate and benign; but at a distance, terrible and despotic. Justice, order, and law, were sometimes violated under the protection of her favourites, who practised with impunity the most odious tyranny. She aspired to the character of an author, to which her celebrated *Instructions for a Code of Laws*, her dramatic pieces and proverbs, her tales and allegories for the improvement of her grand-children, seem justly to entitle her. Her Letters to Voltaire are accounted her most interesting productions. She composed also for the young grand-dukes, a plan of education, compiled principally from the writings of Locke and Rousseau, which does credit to her liberality and discernment.

The generosity of Catharine, the splendour of her reign, the magnificence of her court, her institutions, her monuments, and her victories, were to Russia what the age of Louis XIV. was to Europe. But the French constituted the glory of Louis, Catharine that of the Russians. The former reigned over a polished people; the latter had a nation to form, and her measures were her own. Her active and regular life, her moderation, firmness, fortitude, and sobriety, were qualities for which she was remarkable. The barbarous country, over which she reigned, the grossness of its manners, and the difficulties with which she had to contend, ought to be duly considered, in estimating her character

No excuse can be offered for her licentiousness as a *woman*; but as a *sovereign*, posterity will probably allow her the title of *great*. If her love of glory too often assumed the features of a destructive ambition, it cannot be denied that she

she possessed an enlightened and magnanimous mind. Let us not, however, be dazzled by the greatness, or the beneficence of Catharine. Let us not be seduced by those amiable qualities, which many have admired in her; but let us call to recollection the torrents of blood that flowed; the fate of Peter III. and of Iwan; and we shall soon exclaim in the words of the historian, "Let there be henceforth no glory "without virtue! Let injustice and depravity "be transmitted to posterity with no other lau-"rels than the snakes of Nemesis!"

On the death of Catharine II. Paul Petrowitz, her son, who was at that time forty-three years of age, was proclaimed emperor of Russia, and his son Alexander presumptive heir to the throne. The first acts of the new czar were extremely popular; and he seemed to contradict the reports of his stern and capricious disposition. Every hour, every moment, announced some wise changes, some just punishment, or some merited favour. Having spent thirty five years of his life amidst restraint, denials, and contempt, he appeared to have profited by his sufferings. The people began to imagine, that his character had been mistaken, or that his long and melancholy seclusion from court had been the means of refining his mind. He liberated Kosciusko and all the Poles, whom Catharine had confined in prison; and on the former bestowed a sum of money, with which he might live free and independent in another country.

Paul caused the corpse of his father, Peter III. to be taken up and brought to the palace, to receive similar honours with that of the empress his wife. Prince Baratinsky and count Alexius Orloff,

Orloff, two of the muderers of the unfortunate czar, were fixed on to officiate as chief mourners. The imperial crown was placed on the coffin of Peter; and over both was the following inscription in Russ: "Divided in life, united in death." In presence of the assembled court, and amidst sable hangings, lighted tapers, and all the solemnity of imperial woe, the two mourners took their station. Orloff, whose nerves were strong, endured the scene unshaken; but his companion fainted beneath his emotions, and could scarcely be supported with the aid of volatile salts, and other stimulative applications.

Paul's conduct in the first days of his reign was soon afterwards reversed. The shape of a hat, the colour of a feather, boots, spatterdashes, cockades, queues, and sword-belts, became the affairs of state, which absorbed his astonishing activity. He issued a prohibition against wearing round hats; forbade the Russians to harness their horses after the ancient mode, and ordered them to adopt the German fashion of dress. The ancient custom of alighting from their horses or coaches, and prostrating themselves in the snow, or in the mud, on meeting the czar, his wife, or son, had been abolished by Catharine, but was revived by Paul in all its rigour. The ceremony established within the palace was equally strict and absurd. Whoever was permitted to kiss the hand of the emperor, was ordered to make the floor resound at the same time, by striking it with his knee; and it was required, that the salute of the lips should be heard.

To notice all the ordinances of a similar nature which were issued in the course of one week, would be tedious and uninteresting. What could

could be hoped of a man, who, succeeding Catharine, could consider such regulations as the most urgent and important? Those ordinances were frequently so contradictory to each other, that they were often modified, or annulled, soon after their promulgation. The new emperor, indeed, appears to have thought that he could govern a vast empire, as he had governed the village in which he resided; his capital, as his house; and thirty millions of men of all ranks and all nations, as a score of lackeys.

Paul concluded a treaty with the king of Great Britain, by which they agreed to oppose, in the most efficacious manner, the successes of the French arms in the extension of the principles of anarchy, to promote a solid and lasting peace, and to endeavour to re-establish the balance of Europe. Accordingly in the spring of the next year, the Russian army, under the command of general Suwarrow, marched into Italy, and effected a junction with the Austrian troops. The emperor, not satisfied with carrying on hostilities against every republican ally of France, declared war against Spain. He also entered into another treaty with Great Britain, and agreed to furnish 17,593 men for an expedition against Holland. These troops accordingly assembled at Revel, were conveyed to the place of their destination in vessels freighted by his Britannic majesty, and joined the English army.

A. D. 1799.

The Russians and their allies were for some time fortunate, but their successes were afterwards converted into mournful defeats. Of the three generals, who commanded the Russian armies in the United Provinces, the Helvetic Cantons,

tons, and Italy, the first was taken prisoner by the French, the second witnessed the destruction of a great part of his troops and the loss of Switzerland, and Suwarrow with difficulty escaped across the mountains with the wreck of his forces, and penetrated into the Grisons.

Informed of these disasters, the emperor recalled his troops into Russia, and broke off the alliance which had been concluded with the courts of London and Vienna. A misunderstanding was said to have arisen between the Austrian and Russian commanders; but it seems probable, that the conduct of Paul was chiefly occasioned by his capricious disposition. To the astonishment of all Europe, he had declared himself grand-master of Malta, at the time when he formed an alliance with the Ottoman Porte. The unwillingness of the British government to acquiesce in this appointment excited the indignation of Paul. Not content with breaking off all connexion with the court of London, he formed an armed neutrality with Prussia, Sweden, and Denmark. This was followed A. D. 1800. by laying an embargo on all British ships in the harbours of Russia, and of which at Petersburgh, Riga, Revel, Cronstadt, and Narva, there were about three hundred. The officers and seamen were sent into the interior parts of the country, where they were scantily provided for; while the warehouses of all the British merchants in Russia were sealed up, and their property was placed under sequestration. Preparations were now made by the courts of Petersburgh, Stockholm, and Copenhagen, for carrying on a naval war with Great Britain: and the emperor Paul informed the Ottoman Porte,

that if the English were permitted to land in Egypt, for the purpose of attacking the French troops in that country, he would consider it as an act of hostility against Russia. Great Britain, however, instead of being intimidated by the increasing number of her enemies, attacked and destroyed the Danish fleet*, and was preparing to avenge herself on the court of Stockholm, when the emperor Paul was barbarously assassinated in his chamber, in the middle of the night, by a conspiracy among the officers of his court. It was first pretended that he died of an apoplexy, but his assassination is now no longer considered as any secret: indeed the names of the assassins and the particulars of its mode have been publicly described. His death was however considered as a fortunate event by his subjects and by mankind at large; for although he was not a man of blood, and never permitted any capital executions, yet he was the terror of all about him, in consequence of his caprice, and of the arbitrary banishment of his best subjects into Siberia.

A. D. 1801.

His son, Alexander, who succeeded him, issued a proclamation, in which he declared, that having been educated in the principles which had adorned the reign of his illustsious grandmother, under whom Russia had arrived at the summit of glory, he should follow her wise in-

* The battle of Copenhagen, which was won by the gallantry and good conduct of lord Nelson, would probably have put an end to the Northern confederacy, even had not the catastrophe of Paul so opportunely taken place.

tentions,

tentions, and restore the interrupted happiness of his subjects. Accordingly, the new emperor signed a treaty with Great Britain, in which the English gave up some of their claims; the right of search was limited, and the articles deemed contraband in war were diminished, and more clearly ascertained and defined.

POLAND.

(NOW PART OF THE RUSSIAN, PRUSSIAN, AND AUSTRIAN DOMINIONS.)

CHAP. I.

Description of Poland, and its History till the Extinction of the Family of Piastus.

POLAND, which is denominated by the natives Poloka, a Sclavonian word, signifying a level or champain country, is composed of vast plains, which were anciently covered with woods that abounded with wild beasts and game of every kind. In its original extent, Poland, with the annexed duchy of Lithuania, was bounded on the north by Livonia, Muscovy, and the Baltic sea; on the east by Muscovy; on the south by Hungary, Turkey, and little Tartary; and on the west by Germany: and extended from forty-seven degrees and forty minutes to fifty-six degrees and thirty minutes of north latitude; and from sixteen to thirty-four degrees of east longitude from London. Its greatest length was about seven hundred miles, and its breadth, at a medium, about five hundred; and had the form of its government been as perfect as its situation was compact and favourable for commerce, it might, perhaps, have been one of the richest, happiest, and most powerful kingdoms in the universe.

As

As this is an extensive and champain country, the air, as might naturally be expected, is salubrious, but cold, especially in the more northern districts. The summits of the Carpathian mountains, which form a barrier between Poland and Hungary, are covered with eternal snow, that not unusually falls in the middle of summer. The climate, however, is generally temperate and settled, and the weather is less variable, either in summer or in winter, than in most of the hyperborean regions.

The principal rivers in Poland are the Duna, which rising in Russia, discharges its waters into the Baltic; the Memel, which has its source in the palatinate of Novogrodac, and empties itself into the Baltic; the Wiesel or Vistula, which issuing from the Carpathian mountains, at last enters the Baltic; the Niester, which rises in a lake among the Carpathian mountains, and falls into the Black Sea; and the Nieper, or Boristhenes of antiquity, which has its source in Russia, and after a course of nearly a thousand miles, discharges itself into the Black Sea.

The natives of Poland have long been celebrated for their personal strength, courage, and longevity. There are few nations in which the people enjoy a greater share of health; which may undoubtedly be ascribed to the temperature of the climate, the sobriety of the people, and their constant habits of exercise. They also inure themselves to the use of the cold bath, which produces the same effects, and conduces to the vigour of the body. In their general character, the nobles are open, affable, liberal, and hospitable; polite to strangers, rigid to their vassals and dependants, delicate in points of ho-

nour, and vain, ostentatious, and magnificent, in their manner of living, apparel, and equipage. Though their country is naturally fertile, the nobles are poor, and despise the idea of improving their fortunes by trade and industry. They are, perhaps, the only people of the universe, who, by an express law, prohibited the formation of a marine establishment. The nobles are from their infancy instructed in literature, and are able to speak the latin language, but not with great correctness. With regard to the commonalty, they are ignorant, mercenary, mean, indigent, and were formerly slaves in the full extent of the term; being liable to imprisonment, sale, barter, stripes, nay death itself, at the will of their unfeeling and tyrannical masters. But though these are the general leading features of this nation, it would be unjust and uncandid not to suppose, that there are many, even in the lower ranks of life, who are distinguished for their probity, learning, and humanity.

To the account which we have already given of the love of splendour which prevails among the Polish nobility, it may not be improper to add, that whenever they dine or sup, trumpets and other music usually play, and a number of gentlemen attend them, all of whom behave with the greatest obsequiousness and respect. This is a consequence of superior opulence; for, though the whole nobility of Poland are considered as equal, and on a level, yet wealth creates a manifest and real distinction, and those who are in indigent circumstances, are frequently compelled to serve the rich. Notwithstanding, however, this difference on account

account of opulence, the patron generally treats his inferiors with great apparent civility, permits the senior to sit with him at table without his cap, and grants to each of them a menial servant who waits on him, and who is maintained at the expence of the master of the family.

The inhabitants of Poland, who have an almost insuperable aversion to living or sleeping above stairs, have chiefly only ground floors in their houses. The part which they inhabit generally fronts the gate, and the kitchens and offices occupy one side, and the stables the other. The materials, with which they usually build their houses, are wood; but some of the finest dwellings are made of brick or stone, and formed after the Italian stile of architecture. The most elegant, however, of their habitations, though richly furnished, are destitute of their principal ornament, having seldom any gardens or orchards, which even in less fertile countries are seldom neglected. The dwellings of the peasants are in every respect mean and disagreeable, and are only circular huts built with poles, and left open at the top in order to emit the smoke and admit the light. These habitations are covered with thatch, or boards; and as they frequently consist of only one room, the master, his family, and cattle, generally repose in peaceful association.

The Poles commonly travel on horseback, and so fond are they of this conveyance, that they will not undertake the shortest journey without it. They are extremely hardy, and frequently sleep on the ground in frost and snow, without any

any covering, and appear to feel no kind of injury or inconvenience.

The inhabitants of Poland, when considered as members of the community, are divided into three ranks; nobles, citizens, and peasants. The nobility have from the most early periods resided in the country; but though there are different titles among them, such as princes, counts, and barons, the whole body is considered as equal and on a level, and all who boast the advantages of noble birth, address each other by the appellation of brother. They do not consider superior titles as meriting superior respect, each thinking that of a gentleman of Poland as the highest distinction which can possibly be enjoyed. The privileges they possessed, previously to the dismemberment of their country, were many and considerable; and such, indeed, as were wholly incompatible with every idea of civil liberty; being partly acquired by the indulgence of their kings, and partly deduced from ancient custom and prescription. They had the power of life and death over their vassals, were exempted from the payment of taxes, and accountable to none but the king himself, whom they elected, and whom they laid under what restraint they thought proper: by virtue of the *pacta conventa*, none but themselves, and the burghers of some few particular towns, were permitted to purchase lands. In short, the Polish nobility enjoyed an independence utterly inconsistent with a free and well-regulated government, and possessed so much power and authority over their tenants, that they could assign them over, with their lands, cattle, and furniture, to other proprietors. Many of them occupied

cupied estates from five to thirty leagues in extent, and were the hereditary sovereigns of cities, over which the king had neither power nor jurisdiction. The habitation of a nobleman was a safe and secure retreat to persons who had been guilty of the most flagrant and enormous offences; and no one dared to presume to enter and seize the criminals, without the express permission of the master of the house. The nobles kept horse and foot guards continually on duty before their palaces, and marched before them whenever they went abroad; but when they attended the diet in person, they displayed the greatest pomp and magnificence, and were frequently attended by five thousand men in arms. Instances also are not wanting, in which the deliberations of the council were decided by the sword. Whenever these proud and haughty nobles had any suits at law, the diet, or rather tribunal, gave its decision on the subject; but as the energy of justice was too feeble to enforce a compliance with its decrees, the final execution of the sentence depended on the power or weakness of the opponents. In this manner, indeed, quarrels were frequently decided in the first instance, without any appeal to the laws of their country; and some thousands of men were raised by each party, and a mutual occasion sought to plunder, burn, or destroy.

The peasants being born and educated as slaves, entertained no ideas of liberty, and were considered as creatures entitled neither to justice nor humanity; and if one of them was murdered by a grandee, to whom he did not belong, the nobleman was not capitally convicted, but only obliged to make reparation by providing another

vassal

vassal of equal age, condition and value. When a grandee was desirous of cultivating and improving a part of his land, he builded a small wooden hut upon the premises, in which he settled the peasant and his family, and gave them a cow, two horses, and a few poultry; with corn sufficient for their maintenance the first year, and for meliorating their future condition, and adding to the emolument of their master. Thus it is evident, that being possessed of no property of their own, their labours and acquisitions only served to enrich their lord, and to render him more haughty and despotic. They were indispensably obliged to cultivate the ground, and were incapacitated from entering upon any condition of life, which might procure them freedom and independence, or enable them in any manner to improve their circumstances. Besides, they were exposed to the odious, and frequently fatal effects of the caprice, cruelty, and barbarity of their tyrannical masters; who, having full power and authority over their lives and property, too often abused them in the most gross and wanton manner, and subjected the wives and daughters of the unhappy and oppressed peasants to the most brutal treatment. Such was the general condition of the people, before the dismemberment of this country; what are their present state, we are not informed; but each province would necessarily follow the laws and regulations of that kingdom, to which, by the treaty of partition, it was annexed.

Previously also to the same period, the constitution of Poland was extremely singular, and different from every other government ancient

or

or modern. It was stiled a republic, composed of the king, senate, and nobles. The king was considered as the head, and was elected by the nobility and clergy on the plains of Warsaw, where they assembled on horseback for that purpose. If there happened to be a refractory minority, the majority had no other controul over their antagonists than what superior violence could effect. Immediately after his election, the king signed the *pacta conventa* of the kingdom, by which he engaged to introduce no foreigners into the army or government, and acceded to such other stipulations as the haughty and imperious nobles thought proper to impose. The king, therefore, could only be regarded as the president of the senate, which was composed of nearly one hundred and fifty of the principal nobility and clergy. Notwithstanding the acknowledged defects of this constitution, it appears to have been founded on principles, which, if not ill applied, might have been made favourable to public liberty by restraining the prerogative of the king, and by the institution of frequent assemblies; but the exercise of the *veto*, or tribunitial negative, which was vested in every member of the diet, was subversive of all order and government.

The general passion for tracing their origin to the remotest antiquity has involved the early ages of all nations in fable and absurdity. Historians, however, are unanimous in placing Lech at the head of the Polish princes; and, to render him more illustrious, they pretend that he was lineally descended from Japhet the son of Noah. He governed Poland as a duke; and, like Alexander A. D. 550.

the Great, left his kingdom to the most worthy, who proved to be Viscimir. This prince was an illustrious warrior, and, after a long and glorious reign, left the nation exhausted by his victories and ruined by his conquests. The Poles, therefore, assumed a different form of administration, and divided their dominions into twelve provinces, each of which was governed by a great lord, denominated a palatine, or waiwode.

These governors, however, exercising despotic power, the people proceeded to the election of a sovereign, and made choice of Vanda, daughter to one of their kings. This princess possessed in an eminent degree all the amiable qualities of her sex, with superior intelligence and masculine courage. She was prudent, just, temperate, and eloquent; and her affability secured the hearts of those whom her beauty had captivated. Rithogar, a Teutonic prince, sent to demand her in marriage, and declared that he would wage war against Poland, should Vanda reject his proposals. The princess, whose pride might have yielded to the bland insinuations of love, revolted against this menace, and accepted the challenge of Rithogar, who, being defeated in battle, killed himself through shame and despair. Vanda, who was smitten with the elegant form of the unfortunate prince, determined not to survive him, and, accordingly drowned herself in the Wiesel.

After her death, the Poles re-assumed the aristocratical form of government. But the waiwodes again abused their power; and Poland became equally exposed to external enemies and internal

internal factions. At length, Premislaus, a private soldier, placed himself at the head of the troops, and was raised to the throne in consequence of the victories he obtained over the Hungarians and Moravians. Though indebted to war for his exaltation, he studiously cultivated the arts of peace, and endeavoured to render his people happy. In electing a successor, the Poles declared they would acknowledge him as their prince, who, starting on horseback from a determined spot, should first reach an appointed goal. A Polish lord, thinking to secure the throne to himself, caused iron-spikes to be clandestinly planted in the ground, reserving only a path for his own horse. The fraud, however, was discovered by a young peasant, who was chosen in his stead. A. D. 750.

He assumed the name of Lech III. governed with great wisdom, and rendered his subjects happy. In order to prevent the effects of pride, he caused his rustic habit to be carried before him in all public ceremonies. Nor was this an act of empty ostentation: he was prudent and temperate, the patron of merit, and the protector of the injured. He transmitted his virtues to his two immediate descendants; but his great-grandson, Popiel, was a weak and voluptuous prince, who, too complaisant to his wife, a cruel and calumnious woman, administered poison to his three uncles. From their dead bodies, lying exposed to the open air, issued a swarm of rats, which devoured Popiel, his wife and children; and in him ended, about the year 860, the first race of the dukes, or kings, of Poland. A. D. 774.

Hitherto the princes had possessed only the title of duke, which totally ceased under Popiel's successor Piastus. This man had been originally a wainright, and for his elevation to the supreme dignity was indebted to a miracle similar to that of the widow of Sarepta. Like her, he had received from two heavenly messengers an inexhaustible vessel of oil, which he liberally distributed in a season of general scarcity. The people, astonished at the miracle, conferred on him the crown. On the throne he proved himself the father of his subjects: he was the comforter of the widow, the guardian of the orphan, and the tutelar angel of the poor and the unfortunate. Though neither a statesman nor a warrior, his virtues supplied the place of talents. During his reign, several intestine commotions arose, all of which he appeased by mildness and clemency; and the nobility were afraid openly to revolt against a prince, who seemed to live for the sole benefit of his people. He associated with him in the government his son Ziemowit, who was a magnanimous, warlike, and temperate prince. The grand children also of Piastus inherited his virtues, and one of them, who died in 964, was called the "Eye of Christianity." His successor, Mieczlaus, endeavoured to obtain from the court of Rome the title of king, which, however, he unsuccessfully solicited; but the pope conferred it on his son.

A. D. 999. Boleslaus, surnamed Chrobry, was a prince of great courage, and is chiefly famous for his warlike atchievements. He conquered Bohemia and Moravia, and afterwards subjugated Pomerania, Saxony, Prussia, and Russia. It was now his care to enjoy with his

his people the fruits of so many victories, and to render happy those whom he had rendered powerful. He, therefore, applied himself to the internal government of his dominions; but, the conquered princes again rising in arms, the aged and venerable sovereign was obliged to cover his hoary locks with a helmet. In his last expedition, he exhibited great clemency, and dismissed the prisoner without ransom, penetrated with esteem for his virtues.

On the death of Boleslaus, the assembly of the nation unanimously elected his son, Micczlaus II. as successor to his crown and dominions. This prince, however, was scarcely established in the sovereignty, when a general revolt arose in Russia, Bohemia, Prussia, Moravia and Saxony, which Micczlaus suppressed. Having restored peace to his dominions, he indulged in debauchery, which terminated his existence; but his reign was not undistinguished by martial glory. A. D. 1025.

The states assembled to elect a successor to the throne, and having made choice of his son Casimir, yet in the years of adolescency, vested his mother Rixa with the power of administration, and declared her regent of the kingdom. She, however, soon displayed her arbitrary disposition; and the Poles, incensed at her conduct, took up arms, and expelled her the kingdom. She had previously sent before her into Germany the immense treasures which Boleslaus had amassed, and which procured her the protection of the emperor. Young Casimir also was compelled to fly; and the people fell into anarchy and confusion. The prince took refuge in France, and A. D. 1034.

became a monk in the abbey of Cluni. At length, the calamities under which the Poles laboured, induced them to recal Casimir, and reinstate him on the throne. The pope discharged the prince from his monastic vows; but he obliged entire Poland to establish the tax called Peter-pence, which was an annual tribute paid to the sovereign pontiff, and which was imposed on most of the nations of Europe. During the reign of this prince, the arts and sciences, which had been hitherto unknown, began to be cultivated. Casimir practised the pacific virtues, and died honoured and esteemed by his subjects, whom he had endeavoured to render happy.

A. D. 1040.

He left three sons, of whom the eldest Boleslaus II. was immediately after the death of his father crowned king of Poland. He attacked Bohemia, defeated the Hungarians, and marched an army into Russia, of which he determined to atchieve the conquest. He advanced rapidly into the dutchy of Kiow, but was suddenly stopped by Kiow, at that time the strongest fortress in the north, and the richest city in the Russian dominions. This place he besieged, and after a long resistance, took it; but, instead of punishing the obstinacy of its inhabitants, he applauded their courage, and granted them favourable terms, on account of the valour they had displayed. Unfortunately, however, Boleslaus suffered himself to be subdued by the pleasures of luxury; and his army degenerated into a mob of effeminate debauchees.

A. D. 1050.

The prince, as well as his soldiers, seemed to have forgotten his native country, and remained seven years in Kiow. This long absence occasioned

sioned great confusion in Poland; and the Polish women, irritated by the indifference of their husbands, and by their preference of the ladies of Kiow, resolved to take signal vengeance, and unanimously admitted their slaves to all the privileges of husbands. At the news of this resolution, the soldiers attributed their dishonour to the king, whom they accused as a weak and voluptuous prince. Almost the whole army, impatient of revenge, returned to Poland, and left their sovereign in Russia.

The women, however, had armed their servile paramours, and, actuated by despair, fought beside their gallants, sought out their husbands, in the heat of the battle, and fancied they could obliterate their crime by plunging their swords into the breasts of those who attempted to avenge it. While the combatants were thus engaged, Boleslaus arrived with a numerous army of Russians, and indiscriminately assailed the women, their gallants, and the soldiers, who had deserted his standard. This sudden attack united the women, their husbands and slaves; several obstinate battles were fought; and Poland was inundated with the blood of her inhabitants.

To add to the calamities of this unfortunate country, the schisms, which had for some time rent the church of Rome, caused also a division in this kingdom. There arose, likewise, a contest for power and riches between the king and the clergy; and Gregory VII. who at that time occupied the papal throne, excommunicated the monarch, and released his subjects from their allegiance. In vain did Boleslaus oppose his authority: superstition clouded the minds of the people,

who yielded implicitly to the dictates of the pontiff; and the unfortunate monarch was compelled to fly into Hungary with his son Micezlaus. Nor was the vengeance of Gregory satiated with driving him from his throne: Boleslaus, in order to gain a subsistence, was obliged to exercise the humble functions of a cook in a convent in Corinthia, where he died.

AD. 1082. It was not till after he had impoverished the country, that the pope consented to grant the title, not of king, but of duke only, to Uladislaus, the brother of the late monarch. The pontiff bestowed the regal dignity on the king of Bohemia, and, by that means, excited a jealously between the two sovereigns. The want of energy in this prince proved the source of discord in his family, and disturbance in the state: his natural son Sbigneus contended for the authority with Uladislaus. This monarch had the reputation of a mild and virtuous sovereign, but was too much under the influence of parasites and flatterers.

AD. 1103. On the death of Uladislaus, the dominions were equally divided between Sbigneus and Boleslaus III. of whom the latter was the legitimate son of the late sovereign. A difference, however, arose between the two brothers, which terminated in favour of Boleslaus, who afterwards alone occupied the throne. This prince is represented in history as a hero, and compared to Boleslaus Chrobry, surnamed the Great. He was victorious in forty battles; and, having been once defeated, died of chagrin. Though sensible of the fatal consequences of a partition of his dominions, he divided his duchy among his five sons.

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The principal share, together with the title of duke, fell to the eldest, Uladislaus II. surnamed the Driveller. The harmony of the princes was disturbed by the ambition of Christina, the sovereign's consort, who possessed an absolute ascendency over her husband, and inspired him with the desire of depriving his brothers of their portions. This ambitious project, however, excited the indignation of the people, who deposed Uladislaus, and raised to the ducal dignity his brother Boleslaus IV. surnamed Crispus. A. D. 1139. A. D. 1146.

This prince commenced his reign with an act of generosity, and ceded Silesia to the deposed sovereign for his maintenance. During some years, Poland enjoyed profound tranquillity under the government of Boleslaus, who lived in the greatest harmony with his brothers Henry, Mieczlaus, and Casimir. The emperor Frederic Barbarossa, however, at the solicitations of Uladislaus, and the address of Christina, who was his kinswoman, attacked with a numerous and powerful army the territories of the Polish sovereign. But Boleslaus, by the assistance of his brother Mieczlaus; succeeded in repelling the German invaders, and concluded a treaty with the emperor.

On the death of Uladislaus, his brother Mieczlaus III. was raised to the ducal throne. This succession, however, was disputed by his brother Casimir, and by the sons of Uladislaus; but the states preferred Mieczlaus, on account of the marks of wisdom, valour, and affability, which he had already displayed. He was surnamed the Old, because he was elevated A. D. 1174.

to

to the throne at an advanced age. No sooner did he cease to be a subject than he became a tyrant. His cruelty was such, that, for want of criminals on which to exercise his barbarity, he caused tortures to be inflicted on human beings. This conduct alienated the affections of the people, who deposed the tyrant, and offered the throne to his brother, Casimir II. This prince was mild, humane, and so scrupulously virtuous that, when the crown was tendered to him, he hesitated to accept it, through an apprehension of violating the property of his brother. At length, he was moved by the following argument of the states: "The election "of a sovereign supposes a compact between the "prince and the people. The conditions which "were prescribed to Micezlaus, when we pre- "ferred him to the sons of his brother, have been "broken by him; and he is, therefore, legiti- "mately deposed."

This speech induced Casimir to accept the ducal dignity. Micezlaus, however, being reduced to great indigence, supplicated his brother, who offered to resign to him the crown; but the states refusing to place themselves under the government of a prince, whom they had deposed, opposed his abdication. Casimir was ill requited for his generosity by Micezlaus, who continued to harrass him by secret conspiracies or open hostility; whilst the former, brave and merciful, ceased not to conquer him, nor to grant him repeated pardons. Casimir died at Cracow, and was considered as the best, the mildest, most liberal, just, and amiable prince, that ever filled the throne of Poland.

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He was succeeded by his son Lech V. surnamed the Fair, whom Mieczlaus at length compelled to yield him possession of the throne, to which he carried back all the vices that had before caused his deposition. He was on the point of being again dispossessed, when death, accelerated by his debaucheries, anticipated the interference of his subjects. It was a maxim with this prince, that "a sove-"reign is not bound to observe his oath, except "when neither his safety, nor his advantage, "requires that he should violate it." A. D. 1194.

On the death of Mieczlaus, the crown was restored to Lech, who did not enjoy it in peace and tranquillity, being incessantly distracted by domestic and foreign wars. The Tartars, having made an irruption into Poland, regarded neither sex nor quality, but ravaged with fire the provinces through which they passed, and massacred all the inhabitants whom they could not drag into captivity. Of those who escaped, the nobles fled into Hungary, and the peasants sought an asylum in the recesses of the forests, and the most inaccessible places. In this situation was Poland, when death put an end to the misfortunes of Lech, whose reign was the most inauspicious in the annals of that republic. It is said that he fell the sacrifice of a faction. A. D. 1206.

He was succeeded, however, by his son Boleslaus V. surnamed the Chaste, who was opposed in the sovereignty by his uncle Conrade, the son of Casimir. He had also to contend with the Teutonic knights, who were obstinate and formidable enemies; and, being at that time in possession of Prussia, coveted A. D. 1226.

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the frontier provinces of Poland. But Boleslaus extricated himself out of these difficulties, and after a long reign, of which we have received few particulars, left the crown to Lech
A. D. 1279. VI. his kinsman, who was surnamed the Black, and whom he had adopted. The reign of this prince was replete with domestic and foreign troubles; and, as he died without issue, his crown was contested, and his dominions were exposed to the horrors of civil discord.

Henry, surnamed the Honest, triumph-
A. D. 1290. ing over his adversaries, seized the throne, and was acknowledged duke of Poland. He was descended from the ancient family of Piastus, and reigned about five years, at the end of which he was taken off by poison.

On his death he left the crown to Premis-
A. D. 1294. laus, his relation, who was also a descendant of Piastus. Poland had lost nearly all its splendor since its princes had been deprived of the regal dignity. Premislaus knew the influence of pageantry on the minds of the people, and, therefore, assumed the title of king, with all the insignia of royalty. This measure, however, did not screen him from the attempts of a rival, named Uladislaus, who possessed only distant claims to the succession. These two princes confined themselves each to a distinct portion of the kingdom; but when Uladislaus III. in consequence of the violent
A. D. 1299. death of Premislaus, in which he had taken no part, had an opportunity of uniting the whole under his sceptre, and of becoming sole sovereign of Poland, he was deposed

deposed on account of his vices. No sooner was the throne vacant, than it was offered by the unanimous voice of the people to Winceslaus, king of Bohemia, who commenced his reign by persecuting with rigour the deposed monarch and his adherents. The Poles, however, becoming disgusted with his mal-administration, and his preference of the Bohemians, permitted Uladislaus to re-ascend the throne, on his promising to reform his conduct, and to behave himself suitably to his station. He afterwards acted as a wise and prudent king, and caused the nation to forget the errors of his youth. A. D. 1300. A. D. 1305.

His son Casimir III. surnamed the Great, succeeded him in the throne. His father had advised him to place no confidence in the promises of the Teutonic knights; and Casimir soon found reason to adopt his sage counsel. But he defended his frontiers against them on the side of Prussia, and also repelled them on that of Russia. He formed a new code of laws, which he committed to writing; for, before the time of Casimir, the Poles had only oral traditions. In embarrassing cases, the formula of an oath was delineated on paper, and delivered into the hands of the party who was to pronounce it. If, in reading it, he hesitated, or made a mistake, he was immediately considered as guilty; but, in any event, both parties paid large fines to the judges. Casimir resolved to reform these abuses, and ordered that the whole of the costs should fall on him whose obstinacy, injustice, or desire of tyrannizing over his fellow-subjects, had occasioned the law-suit. This prince was a model of integrity, wis- A. D. 1333.

dom

dom and prudence; but it is a reproach to his memory, that he divorced his queen, and elevated in her stead an artful and intriguing mistress.

A. D. 1370. Casimir had been careful to continue the Polish succession in the family of Piastus, and adopted such measures that, after his death, Lewis, king of Hungary, his nephew by his sister, was declared by the diet sovereign of Poland. During the reign of the late monarch, Lewis had sworn to observe the pacta conventa, which greatly restricted his authority. His partiality to the Hungarians excited the jealousy of the Poles, who, nevertheless, quietly acquiesced in his administration.

A. D. 1384. On the death of Lewis, the states assembled and elected his daughter Hedwiga, on condition that she should not marry without their approbation. She was scarcely seated on the throne before several neighbouring princes sent to demand her in marriage. William of Austria attended in person, and captivated the princess by the beauty of his figure, his magnificence, and polite address; but the diet refused to consent to a union, which might render Poland a dependent province. Jagello, duke of Lithuania, also demanded the queen in marriage by a splendid embassy, and his proposals seemed so advantageous, that, notwithstanding Hedwiga's predilection for William of Austria, the Poles obliged her to bestow her hand on the Lithuanian. The nuptials were celebrated with the greatest magnificence; Jagello, according to agreement, was baptized in the Christian faith, and assumed the name of Uladislaus; and the duchy of Lithuania was for ever annexed

annexed to the crown of Poland, but not as a dependent province.

CHAP. II.

From the Extinction of the Family of Piastus, to the Abdication of the Throne by John Casimir.

ULADISLAUS IV.* no sooner ascended the throne of Poland, than 1388, he proceeded to effect a change in the religious sentiments of the Lithuanians, who were at this time Pagans, and worshipped fire, trees, serpents, and other reptiles, in their obscure forests, and who, it is thought, sacrificed human victims. He killed their serpents, cut down their forests, extinguished their sacred fires, destroyed their temples, and demonstrated to them the impotence of their gods. At first they expected that the signal vengeance of heaven would be inflicted on the perpetrator of these acts; but seeing that he received no injury, they readily embraced Christianity, were baptized in the Christian faith, and instructed in the doctrines of Jesus. A. D.

Uladislaus having left a great number of priests in Lithuania, returned to Poland, and constituted his brother Skirgello, viceroy of the duchy. This last measure he had cause to regret. Skirgello was cruel, ambitious, and of

* By some he is called the fourth, by others the fifth, of that name; a circumstance that considerably embarrasses the history of his predecessors.

dissolute manners. The king associated with him his cousin Vitowda, a prince of an amiable character; and also joined to them, in the government of the duchy, his brother Swidrigello. The different interests and designs of these princes occasioned great disturbances in Lithuania, which extended to Poland itself. The Teutonic knights, availing themselves of these disorders, made successful irruptions into the country, and wrested from Poland many of its provinces. Uladislaus having raised a numerous and formidable army, penetrated into Prussia, and, engaging the knights in a general battle, obtained a signal victory. Had he pursued this advantage, it is probable he might have given a fatal blow to the order; but certain cabals that were formed at his court induced him to conclude a treaty of peace with the knights. After a prosperous and glorious reign, Uladislaus paid the last debt to nature, and was lamented by his subjects, who equally admired the qualities of his head and the virtues of his heart.

A. D. 1435. On the death of the late king, his son Uladislaus VI. who was then in the ninth year of his age, succeeded to the crown of Poland. This prince had scarcely ascended the throne of his father, when the Tartars made an irruption into Poland, and desolated the country. A few years after, the ambition of the Turkish emperor Amurath induced him to invade Hungary, which engaged the Poles in a war with that monarch. Uladislaus was so earnest to signalize his courage, against the infidels, that he took the command of the army before he had attained the age at which the con-

constitution of the state allowed him to assume the reins of government. In conjunction with the valiant Hunniades, he defeated Amurath, and obliged him to sue for peace, which was concluded by mutual oaths; and the Hungarians, charmed with the valour of the youthful monarch, conferred on him their crown.

The pope's legate, who had resided with Uladislaus during the whole of this religious war, insisted that this was a favourable opportunity for humbling the Ottoman power. He instigated the king, therefore, to a rupture of the treaty, and absolved him from the tie of his oath. The consequence was a sanguinary war; and the famous battle of Varna, in which the Polish monarch, who was then only nineteen years of age, fell covered, indeed, with some glory, but sullied with the disgrace of perjury, and having scarcely worn the two diadems, except to feel their thorns. By his side perished the cardinal legate, the person really guilty of the perjury, since he had abused the credulity of the young prince, and impelled him to violate his oath.

Immediately after the unfortunate battle of Varna, Casimir III. brother of the late king, was elevated to the regal dignity. This prince defended his dominions from the Turks, by covering the frontier provinces with garrisons. The tyranny of the Teutonic knights had rendered their government insupportable to the Prussians, who took up arms, and were protected by Casimir. The king defeated the knights in a general engagement, and compelled them to conclude a treaty of peace, A. D. 1445.

by which they ceded several provinces to the Polish monarch.

The crown of Bohemia becoming vacant, the barons bestowed it on Casimir's eldest son, Uladislaus, who was also elected sovereign of Hungary. During the present reign, the deputies of the provinces first appeared in the diet, and claimed a participation of the legislative power, which had been hitherto exercised by the king and the senate. Casimir rendered the Latin language common among his countrymen, by an edict which enjoined the nobles to study it. This prince died more esteemed, than regretted.

Of the four sons of Casimir, Uladislaus, the eldest, was universally excluded by the Poles, who thought him already too powerful in possessing the crowns of Hungary and Bohemia. Sigismund, the second, was opposed by the duke of Mazovia, who had gained to his interest the archbishop of Gnesna. Each of the two parties, finding it impossible to succeed, compromised the difference, and united in electing Casimir's third son Albert, who was declared king of Poland; but being of a weak constitution, he did not long enjoy his dignity.

A. D. 1492.

After the decease of Albert, Sigismund again offered himself a candidate for the vacant throne, and was again rejected. Motives of policy induced the Poles to make choice of Alexander, the fourth son of Casimir, and duke of Lithuania, for their sovereign. The constitution of this prince was not more strong than that of his brother Albert. He was a patron of the liberal arts; but he squandered

A. D. 1501.

squandered the revenue in such profusion, that to impose thenceforward a check on the expensive caprices of their sovereign, the states enacted a law, called the "Statute of Alexander," by which the monarch was prohibited from disposing of the revenue of the crown, without the consent of the senate or diet. With the approbation of the Poles, he bequeathed his dominions to his brother Sigismund.

At the time that this prince was raised to the sovereignty, he resided in Lithuania, the government of which had been conferred on him by the late king. His first care was to reform several abuses in the administration, and to enforce the "statute of" his brother, Alexander, which revoked injudicious grants, and such donations as seemed prejudicial to the public interest. He found that the richest demesnes of the crown were mortgaged, and that most of the revenue was bestowed on ingenious artists. He redeemed the lands, and retrenched the pensions within the bounds of moderation. "Learned men and artists," said he, "are deserving of encouragement; but we "ought not to reward them too profusely." A. D. 1507.

Casimir III. had compelled the Teutonic knights to do homage to the crown of Poland for the possession of Prussia. The marquis of Brandenburg, who had been elected grand-master, at first refused to perform that ceremony; but, having embraced the doctrines of Luther, he was obliged to separate himself from the Teutonic order, and, therefore, entered into a treaty with Sigismund, who granted him half of the province of Prussia, in quality of a secular duke, and a dependent on the crown of Poland.

By this means he deprived the knights of the most valuable part of their dominions, and restrained the ambition of those restless neighbours.

Sigismund is said to have been one of the greatest monarchs that ever filled the throne of Poland. In his epitaph, which was not composed in the language of exaggeration, he was stiled the "conqueror of the Russians, Wala-"chians, and Prussians," and obtained the still more honourable appellation of the "father of "his country." But he saw with regret the daughter of his brother Lewis married to the emperor Ferdinand, by which means Hungary, Bohemia, and Silesia, were for ever lost to the house of Iagello, and annexed to the hereditary dominions of the house of Austria, his rival. Sigismund lived to the age of eighty-three years, and was remarkable for uncommon bodily strength.

A. D. 1548. Previously to his death, he had procured the election of his son Sigismund II. surnamed Augustus, who now ascended the Polish throne. While religion, or rather superstition, armed the powers of Europe against each other, Poland alone enjoyed profound repose under the wise administration of a prince, who was the worthy successor of his renowned parent. He thought it was paying too dear for knowledge to purchase it at the expence of human blood. He was only once engaged in war, and that was against the Russians; and, although he was victorious, he offered them peace. He merited the esteem and affection of his subjects, on account of the interest he took in their happiness and welfare. He governed

Poland

Poland as a good father governs his family. His life would be spotless, if he had not, when enfeebled by old age and infirmity, suffered himself to be ruled by a favourite mistress, who occasioned his deviating from the paths of virtue and from the line of sound policy. In him ended the male race of the family of Iagello.

On the death of the late king, a variety of intrigues was set on foot at the courts of Vienna, France, and Saxony, each of which aimed at raising a prince of their own nation to the throne of Poland. The whole kingdom became a scene of faction, confusion, and corruption. The emperor Maximilian considered it beneath the dignity of the imperial diadem to solicit votes for the election of his son, who, he imagined, would be invited by the states to fill the throne of Poland. But the Poles, disgusted with the arrogance of the house of Austria, threatened to punish with death those that should recommend a prince of that family. The czar of Russia offered to incorporate several entire provinces with Poland, if they would elect him; but they dreaded his arbitrary and despotic disposition. The young king of Sweden, who also appeared on the list, had embraced the doctrines of Luther, and thereby rendered himself odious to the catholics. The duke of Prussia was of a weak constitution, and incapable of governing. The elector of Saxony was a protestant, and moreover a German; and the latter circumstance was extremely disagreeable to the Poles. A marquis of Anspach, and a waiwode of Transylvania, also exerted themselves in the diet.

In

In the midst of these intrigues, John Crasoski, a Polish gentleman of extraordinary merit, but diminutive stature, returned from France, whither he had travelled for improvement. His abilities had recommended him to the notice of Catharine de Medicis; and, owing many obligations to the duke of Anjou, he exaggerated the virtues of that prince. Impelled by curiosity, the Poles flocked about the traveller, and greedily listened to his account of the magnificence of the French court, and of the achievements of the duke of Anjou, who, he said, had crushed the head of faction, exhibited his valour in the field, and become the glory and the bulwark of his country.

It is not known whether Crasoski had been commissioned by Charles IX. to trumpet forth these praises, or obeyed the suggestions of his own zeal. But several grandees, palatines, waiwodes, and starosts, struck with the character of the duke of Anjou, conceived the idea of healing the civil dissensions of the kingdom, by offering him the crown. These sentiments were encouraged by Crasoski, who returned to France, by order of the principal persons in Poland, and acquainted the king and queen, Catharine, that only the formality of an embassy was wanting to procure the crown for the duke of Anjou. Accordingly, negotiators were sent by the French court to Cracow, where they experienced such a reception as had been promised by Crasoski. They granted every thing that the Poles demanded: security for the maintenance of the laws; payment of the late king's debts from the treasury of France; presents to the nobles; and a fleet in the Baltic to assist Poland against Russia.

sia. It was also stipulated, that the young monarch should marry the princess Anne, Sigismund's sister, who was now advanced in years. On this article Henry refused to decide, till his arrival in the Polish dominions.

No sooner were the conditions acceded to, than Henry de Valois was proclaimed king of Poland, and received by the states with universal effusions of joy. The Poles were equally charmed by his majestic air, and by the graces of his youth. They were delighted by his manners, his persuasive eloquence, and the fluency and elegance with which he expressed himself in the Latin tongue, their favourite language. Scarcely, however, was Henry put in possession of the throne of Poland, when he became heir to the crown and dominions of his brother. Queen Catharine had informed him of the death of Charles, and the necessity of his immediate return. Henry could not think of relinquishing the crown of France for that of Poland; and, aware of the impossibility of retaining both, he determined to resign the latter. Leaving, therefore, the fair hopes arising from the esteem and confidence and affection of his adoptive subjects, he returned to his native country, and immerged into that ocean of troubles, in which he finally lost his life. The Poles, not without reason, thought themselves insulted by the preference which he gave to France, and insisted that he should instantly resume the Polish sceptre, or abdicate the sovereignty. In vain did he offer to divide his time between the two kingdoms: they informed him, that, if he did not immediately return, they would formally depose him, and

A. D. 1574.

A. D. 1575.

and elect another monarch. Accordingly, the states having assembled, Henry was solemnly divested of the regal dignity, and the throne declared vacant.

Maximilian now thought that a fair opportunity presented itself for recovering what he had lost the preceding year, by his indolence and arrogance. The faction, however, in his favour, agreed that it would be better to confer the crown on the emperor himself, than on his son, as the dignity of the imperial diadem would give a sanction to their election, and destroy the hopes of every other competitor. This opinion was embraced by the senate, and the states proclaimed Maximilian king of Poland and duke of Lithuania. In imitation, however, of the tribunes of ancient Rome, who had the power of opposing the decrees of the senate, a Polish gentleman, named Stephen Batori, protested against the election of the emperor, and declared it illegal. Batori was supported by a strong party, which brought him forward as a candidate for the throne; his merit in a private station appearing sufficient to counterbalance the splendid birth of an Austrian prince. He had received his first education in a camp, where his courage, ability, and prudence, gained him the esteem of the soldiers, and high consideration among the people. The sovereignty of Transilvania having become vacant, Batori was nominated to it by universal consent, without soliciting that honour. In like manner, his talents and virtues opened to him the way to the Polish throne, which he did not court, though he seized the occasion when it presented itself

to his hand. While Maximilian was disputing about certain conditions, Batori appeared on the spot, married the princess Anne, and was declared king of Poland, by the states. A. D. 1576.

The czar of Russia, thinking the present opportunity favourable for extending his dominions, and for revenging the preference given to Henry de Valois in the preceding election, attacked the territories of Poland with the savage ferocity of a barbarian. His soldiers, not content with butchering their enemies, tortured them, and made them expire in the agonies of cruel and lingering deaths. Such was the horror inspired by their perfidy and cruelty, that the inhabitants of Wender chose rather to bury themselves in the ruins of an untenable town, than surrender to so inhuman an enemy. They sank mines under their houses, and, when they could no longer resist the attacks of the Russians, destroyed the props, and boldly descended with their wives and families into those graves. Batori marched with a numerous army, and attacked the enemy, whom he defeated with great slaughter, but exercised humanity towards his prisoners. A. D. 1578.

The king having established the public tranquillity, turned his attention to the civil government of his kingdom; the administration of justice, and the formation of laws. The measure, however, that reflects the greatest glory on the memory of Batori, was his disciplining the Cossacs, and attaching them to the Polish crown. This people, as their name imports, deduce their origin from some banditti that fled from the neighbouring countries, and settled

settled in the islands situated in the Boristhenes. They lived by plunder, and made incursions into Tartary and Turkey, and sometimes approached the very gates of Constantinople. They soon extended their territories, and became a powerful people. The Cossacs are strong and robust, and so attached to liberty as to be impatient under the mildest restriction. They subsist during whole campains on a kind of black biscuit which they eat with garlic. They are brave soldiers, usually fight on horseback, and are unacquainted with the art of intrenchment, their waggons being their only fortifications. With these they surround themselves, advance behind this moving fortress, sally forth from it with impetuosity, and, when repulsed, retreat to it, and defend themselves with obstinate valour. Such were the men whom Batori resolved to render serviceable to Poland, and to civilize and instruct in the arts of war and peace. He united them in towns; but left them in possession of their useful habits—their attachment to a hardy life, regardless of the inclemency of the seasons, and their more than Spartan sobriety. He established among them all kinds of trades and manufactures, then known in Poland.

The character of Batori is said to be exactly delineated in the following curious epitaph: "In the temple, he was more than a priest; in "the republic, more than a king; in pro- "nouncing sentence, more than a lawyer; in "the army, more than a general; in battle, "more than a soldier; in bearing adversity, "and in pardoning injuries, more than a man; "in defending the public liberty, more than a "citizen; in cultivating friendship, more than "a friend;

" a friend; in social intercourse, more than so-
" ciable; in hunting and subduing wild beasts,
" more than a lion; and, in every other re-
" spect, more than a philosopher." But, notwithstanding his philosophy, there was a violence in his disposition, which transported him to excesses bordering on phrensy. To a paroxysm of that kind, which he experienced on the receipt of some bad news, is ascribed the cause of his death.

On the decease of the late king, Poland was involved in fresh scenes of confusion. Though the Poles had experienced so good a monarch elected from among themselves, they were not cured of the folly of seeking a ruler in foreign countries. The competitors for the crown were Maximilian archduke of Austria, and Sigismund prince of Sweden. Each of these had a separate party, which proclaimed its respective candidate king of Poland, and duke of Lithuania. A war ensued between the two rivals; and the army of Maximilian being defeated, he was obliged to quit the Polish territories. A more decisive action soon after took place, in which the archduke was made prisoner. Sigismund imposed no other conditions on his rival, than a renunciation of his claim to the crown of Poland. A. D. 1586. A. D. 1587.

Sigismund III. surnamed De Vasa, was now firmly established on the Polish throne. Notwithstanding the distresses which Poland had suffered from the contention of the two rivals, she experienced still more and greater calamities, when, on Sigismund's elevation to the sovereignty of Sweden, she was A. D. 1590.

obliged to assist him against his uncle Charles, who endeavoured to wrest from him the sceptre. Perceiving, however, that it would be vain to prosecute the war against Sweden, with the view of dethroning Charles, the Polish monarch was seized with the ambition of obtaining the Russian sceptre for his son. In this attempt, new distresses were heaped upon Poland, which suffered additional misfortunes, when Sigismund, swayed by his attachment to the house of Austria, entered into an aggressive alliance, and drew down on his kingdom the vengeance of the Turks.

A. D. 1620.

Unfortunate as were the last years of this prince's reign, he certainly possessed a virtuous mind, and considerable abilities both for the field and the cabinet. His reputation, however, was diminished by his loss of the crown of Sweden and of the imperial diadem of Russia; and it must be confessed that an obstinate adherence to his pretensions and prejudices led him into irretrievable errors, which proved fatal to the tranquillity of his country.

Uladislaus, the son of Sigismund by a first wife, was considered as presumptive heir to the crown of Poland, though the constitution required that an assembly of the states should determine the succession. John Casimir, however, was supposed to entertain hopes of being raised to the sovereign dignity. The queen his mother, who was second wife to Sigismund, made some attempts in his favour; but the generosity of her son destroyed the measures of this ambitious princess: Casimir despised the idea of supplanting a brother, and put himself at the head of the nobility, who declared for Uladislaus.

Uladislaus. The states, therefore, being unanimous in favour of that prince, he was declared king of Poland, and crowned accordingly. A. D. 1632.

Uladislaus VII. was scarcely established on the throne before an occasion demanded the utmost exertion of his abilities. The Russians, expecting to profit by the unsettled state of the Polish government, made an irruption into Poland, and desolated the territories through which they passed. The king advanced against the enemy with an inferior number of troops, and attacked their lines. The battle was obstinate; but the Russians were at length driven into a narrow defile, where they were obliged to submit to the terms imposed by the conqueror. Uladislaus also obtained a signal victory over the Turks, who had attacked his dominions. A. D. 1634.

In order to punish a chief of the Cossacs, named Kymielniski, for improper behaviour, the Polish governor surrounded his house, which he set on fire. The wife and infant son of Kymielniski perished in the flames; but himself escaped, excited his nation to arms, and ravaged Poland with the fury of a man thirsting for revenge, and exasperated by his wrongs. The whole kingdom was reduced to consternation by those barbarians, when Uladislaus sickened of a malignant fever, of which he died.

He was succeeded by John Casimir, who had been educated among the Jesuits, had taken their habit, and pronounced his vows. To absolve him from these, the pope made him a cardinal. It is also suspected that his father Sigismund had been a Je- A. D. 1648.

suit; and the same opinion is entertained of his brother Uladislaus: at least it is known that the Jesuits possessed great authority, and had occasioned much disturbance, during the last reign. The hatred which the nobility bore to the whole society, fell heavy on a prince, who had once been a member of the community of Jesus. He was, however, elected king of Poland.

John Casimir was no sooner established on the throne, than he expressed his disapprobation of the measures pursued with regard to the Cossacs. To the nobility, who urged him to take the field in person, he replied that negociation was preferable to war; that the Poles were the first aggressors; that they ought not to have set fire to Kymielniski's house; and that it was their duty to make reparation for the injury. The nobles, therefore, resolved to act without his consent, and marched an army into the Ukraine, where they were defeated by the Cossacs with great slaughter. Casimir concluded a treaty with this people, and promised to renew the tribute to their chief, which had been abolished during the last reign. The Cossacs, however, violating this agreement, the king attacked them, and compelled them to sue for peace.

A. D. 1653. The Russians, taking advantage of the present confusion, invaded Poland with a numerous army; and, as if the republic had not been sufficiently embarrassed, Charles Gustavus, who had long harboured ambitious designs against this country, determined to assist in completing her misfortunes. The Swedish

Swedish monarch was joined by a great number of Cossacs, and discontented nobles, who resented the lenity of the Polish sovereign. The Swedes, however, were at length compelled to evacuate Poland, and to retire into their own territories. A. D. 1657.

But the tranquillity of the country, was again soon disturbed by the animosity which existed between the king and the nobles, who determined to decide their differences by the sword. Forces were raised on both sides; and Casimir, unable to bring the people back to their duty, collected a sum of money, which he transmitted to France, whither he went to enjoy that peaceful life which his own country had refused him.

CHAP. III.

From the Resignation of John Casimir, to the Accession of Stanislaus Augustus Poniatowski, the last King of Poland.

THE resignation of Casimir involved the nation in fresh scenes of discord and confusion. It was not without reason considered as an abdication of the sovereignty; and the nobles, therefore, assembled for a new election. But as they had not all participated in the dissatisfaction given to Casimir, they separated into factions, drew their swords upon each other, and threatened not only the freedom of suffrage, but the destruction of the republic. At length, however, a calm succeeded, and the assembly proceeded to canvass the merits of the several candidates, who were all A. D. 1669.

foreigners. The foremost on the list was the son of the czar of Russia, who had been educated after the Polish fashion, spoke the language, and had adopted the manners and usages of the country. The most powerful argument, however, in his favour, was an army of eighty thousand men, which was stationed on the frontiers to await the decisions of the diet. The czar also promised that his son should embrace the catholic religion; that he should publicly renounce all claim to the crown of Russia; that Kiow, and all the places conquered from Poland, should be restored; that four millions should be paid into the treasury of the republic; and that he would furnish an army of forty thousand men, to prevent the other candidates from disturbing the peace of the kingdom.

These proposals were considered as advantageous, but they were accompanied with menaces which rendered them disagreeable, and excited the resentment of the whole Polish nation. As the Poles, however, were not able to oppose and resist so numerous and powerful an army as the czar had stationed on the frontiers of the kingdom, they considered it as more safe and prudent to act with caution, and to give no unnecessary umbrage to the court of Russia. Wishing, therefore, to gain time for their purpose, they found means for not declaring immediately in favour of the Russian prince, and amused the czar with specious appearances. The other candidates were the dukes of Lorraine, of Neuburg, and of Condé. The friends of the last were considered as the most numerous and powerful, and it was thought that the diet would determine in his favour. But many nobles being

accused

accused of having held private meetings, and caballed in favour of the prince of Condé, the assembly was fired with indignation, and deemed him incapable of obtaining the crown, on account of his endeavouring to procure it by unconstitutional means. At length, the palatine of Kâlish spoke as follows: "Will any of these "princes, after his election, acknowledge his "obligations to the suffragans, or distinguish "and reward those who have hazarded their "lives, and spent their fortunes, in elevating "him to the throne? No; gratitude is a virtue "not belonging to sovereigns; and policy might "dictate, that the opposite faction should be "preferred for the sake of establishing unani"mity among the people. Let us then chuse "from among our countrymen a ruler, who, "by the ties of nature and interest, will be "careful of our rights and privileges. Are "there none of the members of the republic "worthy of being raised to the supreme dig"nity? Without acknowledging our own de"merit, and confessing that Poland has no sub"ject deserving of a throne, we cannot invest "a foreigner with the insignia of royalty."

This speech operated powerfully on the people, some of whom immediately pronounced the name of Michael Coribut Weisnowiski, that had been nominated by twenty palatines and noblemen. The suffrages in his favour were instantly very numerous, and he was elected without opposition king of Poland. It was, however, matter of surprize to see a person raised to the throne, who claimed no pretensions on account of merit, and who was poor and in narrow circumstances. He was, indeed, collaterally

ally descended from the house of Iagello, but had been reduced to great distress by the losses which his father sustained in the war with the Cossacs.

A. D. 1670. The disposition of Weisnowiski was tranquil and unambitious, and he was greatly surprised that he should be elected king; but his astonishment was increased on being dragged to a throne extemporarily erected in the midst of the assembly. He burst into tears, alleged his incapacity, and entreated that they would not exalt him to that high rank, where he must become the sport and laughter of the nation. At length, however, he was obliged to acquiesce in the determination of the people; but both the king and his subjects were alike astonished at his election.

The czar of Russia, incensed at his son's disappointment, and the duplicity of the Polish deputies, who had long flattered him with hopes, and soothed him with promises, determined to revenge the insult; and, not satisfied with the discontent of the Cossacs, he entered into a treaty with the Porte, by which it was agreed, that the Ukraine should be ceded to the sultan, on condition of his assisting the czar against the Poles. Accordingly, the Russians and Tartars having united their forces, advanced into Podolia, and laid siege to the fortress of Kaminiec, which, though strongly defended, was soon obliged to submit. Nothing could equal the consternation of the whole kingdom, when the news arrived, that Kaminiec had surrendered to the enemy, though no provision had been made for its security. The people blamed the senate, who, endeavouring to remove the odium from themselves,

selves, charged the king with inattention and neglect, though it was evident that the short duration of his reign had precluded him from becoming sufficiently acquainted with the state of the garrisons, and with any affairs civil or military. Recrimination took place of action; and no troops being raised to oppose the farther progress of the enemy, the king was compelled to make a disadvantageous peace, of which all the blame was thrown upon him: Podolia was ceded to the Cossacs; and Michael agreed to pay the sultan an annual tribute of twenty-two thousand ducats.

This agreement it is probable the king would have strictly observed, had the enemy performed their engagements; but, instead of retiring, they advanced and besieged Leopold, which was so strongly defended by fifteen hundred men that the Turks, who were informed of the approach of a Polish army, were under the necessity of raising the siege. John Sobieski, the crown-general, who had been informed that the Turkish allies were extremely dissatisfied with their commander, attacked the enemy with a very inferior force, and, after an engagement, which continued for three days, succeeded in gaining a glorious and complete victory. Not more than fifteen thousand of the whole Turkish army, which, previously to the commencement of the battle, exceeded three hundred thousand men, effected their escape. The defeat was so complete, that, had the Polish general been suffered to profit by his success, the sultan would have been obliged to forego the tribute which had been imposed, and the Cossacs to give up Podolia; but the Poles, refusing to continue longer in

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the field than was required by the laws of their country, returned home, and left the king to conclude a peace with the enemy, on such terms as he could obtain. The chagrin, occasioned by the conduct of his subjects, hastened the period of the sovereign's death.

The decease of the king opened a new scene of corruption, intrigue, and faction. Sobieski, though victorious against the Turks, did not think a triumph a sufficient claim to entitle him openly to enter the lists for the crown. He had secretly aspired to it after the retreat of Casimir; but the high consequences of the other applicants had prevented him from declaring himself a candidate. In the present vacancy of the throne, the same line of conduct was pursued, but the event was different and more successful. He alternately enrolled himself under the banners of the different competitors, enfeebled their parties, defeating one by means of another, until, at the opportune moment, he announced his intentions. No sooner was he nominated, than great numbers immediately gave him their suffrages Almost the whole diet yielded to the current of popularity, through fear, inclination, or a desire of obtaining the favour of a man, who, it was evident, would soon wear the diadem. Most of the Lithuanians, however, opposed his election, and entered protests; but, finding resistance equally vain and dangerous, they submitted, and joined in proclaiming him king.

A. D. 1674. John Sobieski no sooner ascended the throne of Poland, than he exhibited an instance of his generosity and benevolence, by voluntarily providing a maintenance for the queen-dowager, who violently opposed his

his elevation. He also declared his intentions of continuing the war against the Turks, and undertook to maintain at his own expence a body of one thousand foot-soldiers. The senators, nobles, and great men were encouraged to imitate his example, and provide for the security of the republic. His ardour for resuming hostilities induced him to postpone his coronation: nor did he accept the honours of that solemn ceremony, until he had, by two years of victories, obliterated the disgrace of the last treaty, and secured the tranquillity of the kingdom.

Having concluded an advantageous peace with the Turks, Sobieski applied himself to re-establish the finances of Poland. He was, however, making continual preparations for war, by which he excited a suspicion, that he wished to extend the prerogative of the crown, and to render the government in some measure military. He contracted with the emperor Leopold a treaty of offensive and defensive alliance, by which the parties agreed to assist each other against the Turks. This convention, and the disturbances in Hungary, dissipated the gathering storm, and convinced the Poles of the necessity of keeping the army on a respectable footing. No great length of time elapsed before the king was called upon to fulfil his engagements with Leopold. Vienna was closely invested, and on the point of falling into the hands of the Turks, when Sobieski, in consequence of the most pressing letters from the emperor, took the field with twenty thousand men, and marched to join the imperialists, who were commanded by prince Charles of Lorraine.

Having

Having deliberated on the proper measures to be pursued, the united army, which amounted only to fifty thousand men, passed the Danube on the 10th of September, and by narrow defiles gained the heights of Schallemberg without opposition. Sobieski in person, at the head of a body of horse and hussars, attacked the vizier's camp, and put the left wing of the Turkish army in the greatest consternation; while prince Charles, with the imperialists, broke the Turkish right at the same time. The victory was complete and decisive, and was ascribed to the abilities and bravery of Sobieski, and to the valour of the Poles, whom nothing could resist.

A. D. 1683.

But though the king of Poland had thus compelled the Turks to raise the siege of Vienna, he was frigidly thanked for his services by the emperor, who, at an interview which followed that memorable engagement, insisted on the precedency due to himself. But the general esteem amply compensated Sobieski for the coolness and concealed jealousy of the Austrians. Having returned to his own dominions, he did not experience that happiness and satisfaction which he had a right to expect. By his care and attention, the police had been re-established, and the laws resumed their vigour; but these very circumstances were displeasing to the nobles, who regretted that their tyrannical domination was restricted within the bounds of justice; for which reason they omitted no opportunity of expressing their discontent. The great object of Sobieski's policy was to place his son in the succession; and for this purpose a diet was assembled at Grodno. The prince attended in person,

and

and expected to be seated under the same canopy with his father; but the malcontents, under the mask of patriotism, opposed the measure as unconstitutional; and the king had the mortification of being convinced that, at his death, the sceptre which he had introduced into his family, would not continue in it.

Popular clamours disturbed the reign of Sobieski, who had once been the darling of his subjects, and the admiration of surrounding nations. It was asserted that all his views concentrated in amassing wealth; but, when we take a review of his character, it seems more than probable that this accusation was insidious, and unjust. In the latter years of his life, he paid too great deference to the counsels of his queen, who was a native of France, and a woman of refined intellect, but bold, passionate, and capricious. The conduct of the king, however, was occasioned not so much by weakness, as by his weariness of the government, and the disgust arising from the contradiction which he experienced. Not sufficiently attentive to conceal his resentment, he suffered the nobles too clearly to perceive his dislike of them; and, though impolitic in that instance, he is acknowledged to have been in every other respect a wise and deep politician. In a word, he was to Poland what Vespasian was to Italy: both rose by the same gradations and the same virtues, from the command of armies to the sovereignty of the state; and both were reproached with the same failings, and probably with equal injustice. To conclude the character of Sobieski, he was well acquainted with science; and his eloquence was no less admired in the senate, than his valour in the field. In addition

to his native language, he understood the Latin, the French, the Italian, the German, and several Turkish dialects. He died of an apoplexy, after a reign of twenty-two years; and was justly considered as the most accomplished sovereign that ever sat on the throne of Poland, A. D. 1696.

The predilection of the queen-mother for her second son, and her efforts to procure him a plurality of suffrages, to the prejudice of the elder, proved injurious to the interests of both. By the conduct which she pursued, she nearly lost all her influence in the diet assembled for the election; and what little credit remained she sold to the party of another candidate. By this means, the number of competitors was insensibly diminished; and from six, as well natives as foreigners, who had stood on the lists in the beginning, after about a year passed in intrigues, they were reduced to two—Frederic-Augustus, elector of Saxony, and the prince of Conti.

Matters being in this situation, the nobles, who amounted to one hundred thousand men, assembled on the plain of Warsaw; each palatinate being divided into companies, and ranged under their proper banners, with all the electors on horseback, armed with lances. Their looks, their carriage and demeanour, announced the great object of their meeting, and the importance which each considered himself to possess. To create a king! And to see a possibility of himself being the person chosen! Nothing was more capable of exciting lofty sentiments; and here was not an individual, among the hundred thousand electors, who did not possess that power, and might not indulge that hope.

The

The senators having taken their stations, each in front of his division, commenced their harangues; and the bishop of Ploczko was yet speaking, when the nobles of his palatinate exclaimed, "Long live Conti." The name instantly ran from mouth to mouth, and was re-echoed by the palatinates of Siradia, Rava, and the three distinct governments of Prussia. The election was on the point of being concluded, when the palatine of Culm exerted himself in an extraordinary manner, and at the hazard of his life, pronounced the word "*Veto*," which immediately stopped the proceedings of the assembly. He entered his protest against what had been done, and inveighed against the bishop of Plocako, and the chief of the opposite party, whom he denominated violators of the constitution. The earnestness of his reclamations, and the arguments which he advanced, induced the assembly to postpone the election to the ensuing day. The intervening night was not a season of tranquillity: every engine of calumny and intrigue was put in motion; and a greater portion of the time was devoted to drinking than to sleep.

At the break of day, both parties presented themselves nearly equal in strength. The one proclaimed Conti—the other Frederic. Confusion succeeded to the heat of faction; and, as it was impossible to collect the votes, the primate proposed that the party of Conti should range themselves on one side, and that of the elector of Saxony on the other. This proposal was immediately embraced, and so great a number appeared on the side of the French, that the Saxons became alarmed, and redoubled their diligence, but could not equal their adversaries. The French interest

appearing to preponderate, the primate was requested to proclaim the prince of Conti king of Poland; but the resolution of the opposite party, and the fear of bloodshed, induced him to defer the decision of the question, and the meeting was adjourned till next day.

On the morrow the nobles re-assembled, and the intrigues of the imperial minister, and of the palatine of Culm, united all the small parties that had declared in favour of other competitors, and raised the Saxon interest to nearly an equality with that of the French. The primate, however, was prevailed on to proclaim the prince of Conti, and declared Louis de Bourbon king of Poland, and grand-duke of Lithuania. He then repaired to the great church of St. John, where "Te Deum" was sung. The bishop of Cujavia embraced that opportunity to proclaim Frederic-Augustus with the same formalities, sung "Te "Deum" on the field of election, and the next morning celebrated it with more pomp in the church of St. John, where he administered the oath for observing the *pacta conventa* to the imperial minister, in the name of his master the elector.

Each party published manifestoes, maintained that they had themselves strictly observed the constitutional regulations, and accused the others of having violated them. To the war of pens succeeded that of sabres. The pope's nuncio blamed the bishop of Cujavia; but as he had himself been bribed by the elector's money, his indignation was not extreme, nor did he carry his respect for religion beyond the bounds of prudence and of his own interest. Certain it is that the election, on both sides, was unconstitutional

tional and illegal. It was, however, not to be decided by equity, but by intrigue, money, or the sword. The primate proposed to refer the differences that subsisted between the two competitors to the decision of another diet; but being over-ruled, he wrote to the elector of Saxony that the prince of Conti had been elected, and, therefore, requested that he would relinquish his claim to the crown, and thereby restore peace and tranquillity to Poland.

But Augustus, having an army in the neighbourhood, and being well provided with money, paid little regard to this request, and procured himself to be crowned. The ceremony, accordingly, commenced, and a pompous procession was made to the church of St. Stanislaus, where the confession of faith was read, and the sacrament administered. The crown was placed on the head of the elector by the bishop of Cujavia; and the ceremonies being finished, he received the homage of the nobility and gentry who were present. The prince of Conti, who was accompanied by only a small detachment of Frenchmen, and who was disappointed of the Lithuanian troops, whose aid he had been taught to expect, abandoned all hopes of obtaining the crown, relinquished the project entirely, and returned to France, notwithstanding the expence and trouble which this undertaking had cost the court of Versailles.

The departure of his rival brought a fresh accession of power to Augustus; and several districts acknowledged his sovereignty, and took the usual oaths of fidelity. A greater number of the nobility joined him, and declared the legality of his election. The army, which had hitherto

rejected with disdain the pecuniary offers he had made, sent deputies to swear obedience to the new sovereign; and proposals were made by the king of Sweden and the czar of Russia to assist him with a numerous and powerful body of troops.

A. D. 1697. Thus did Frederic-Augustus gain the election, and was acknowledged by the diet, and by all parties, as king of Poland. His ambition impelled him "to purchase repentance" at a dear rate, like those whose passion led them to Corinth in the days of Laïs.

We have not marked the epoch when, from a monarchy, Poland became a republic; and the precise period would perhaps be difficult to ascertain. By insensible degrees, the republican principles were introduced into the monarchical constitution, by means of restrictive conditions imposed on the candidates. They are denominated *pacta conventa*, and are charters of liberty, which the people are ever disposed to enlarge, and the monarchs, on the contrary, to abridge. Hence a struggle, which has constantly kept Poland in a state of disturbance and disquiet.

In ratifying the election of Frederic-Augustus, even his own partisans limited the number of forces that he should be allowed to introduce into Poland, and specified the circumstances which should authorise him to require the assistance of his Saxon troops. But though his sovereignty was in general acknowledged, the king did not think himself perfectly secure without the assistance of soldiers, on whose fidelity he could rely. And neither the terms of the convention were so precise, nor the events so well foreseen, as to prevent him from hastening, under plausible pretexts, the march of an army exceeding the stipulated force,

force, from putting it in possession of the fortresses, and placing it in positions capable of giving umbrage and uneasiness to the republic.

These transactions happened under the new king, who surrounded himself with Saxons, because, being his native subjects, he could place greater confidence in them than in the Poles; and, in order to attach them the better to his person, he loaded them with favours, and bestowed on them the most lucrative and honourable offices of the state. The Saxons became extremely odious, not from their own misconduct, but from the jealousy which the Poles always entertained of foreigners. In this state were affairs when the diet assembled, and demanded that the Saxon troops should be withdrawn. Augustus endeavoured to wave the requisition by every art and intrigue; but finding the debates become serious, and fearing the consequences of a refusal, he assured the assembly that part of the German forces had received orders to quit Poland, and that the remainder would shortly follow them. Such was the popularity of this declaration, that the diet confirmed by unanimous consent an act projected for the safety and authority of the king, and annexed a clause by which the most rigorous punishments were denounced against those who should make any attempts upon his person or dignity. But, notwithstanding the assurances given by the king to the diet, the Saxon troops still remained in Poland. "To what purpose," said the Poles, "so many soldiers in a time of "peace, unless to enslave us!" In order, therefore, to elude the force of this objection, and

and to occupy the minds of the public, he began to prepare for hostilities.

Having secretly conspired with the czar of Russia and the king of Denmark against Charles XII. who was a minor, and had not yet exhibited proofs of his valour and abilities, Frederic-Augustus declared war against Sweden under flimsy pretences; but that contest, instead of contributing to strengthen his authority, plunged him personally into an abyss of misfortunes. The Swede, who was equally politic and brave, fomented the discontents in Poland. He attacked and defeated the Saxons near the Duna, and compelled them to take refuge under the cannon of Birzen. This advantage inflamed the victorious Charles with the desire of extending his designs beyond the revenge which he at first meditated; and he hoped by the end of the campaign to dethrone Augustus. Vast and ideal as this project appeared, it was justified by the event; and, indeed, a variety of circumstances concurred in rendering the issue of the war peculiarly unfortunate to the Polish monarch.

The victories of Charles gave weight to the manifestoes of the Polish confederates, whose manifestoes, on the other hand, sanctioned his victories in the eyes of the nation. The opinion which the Poles had entertained of the king at the time of his elevation to the throne, was changed, because he was become unfortunate. To complete the embarrassment of the Polish sovereign, the Saxon troops were too few in number to oppose the Swedes, and too much dispirited by their defeats to contend with an enemy,

enemy, whom they considered as invincible. Finally, to complete his misfortunes, the address and intrigue of the primate induced the diet to pass a resolution, which declared Augustus deprived of his right and title to the crown of Poland, for having violated the liberties of the people, who by the pacta conventa were released from their oaths of obedience, and engagements of fidelity and allegiance.

Severe and unexpected as this stroke must have been to the unfortunate sovereign, he was not discouraged; but hoped that some change of circumstances, the tyrannical spirit of Charles, the inconstancy of the Poles, his own perseverance, and the interposition of the maritime powers, whose interest it was to check the aspiring ambition of the Swede, would operate in his favour. But though Frederic-Augustus displayed great personal bravery at the head of his troops, he exhibited something worse than weakness in the cabinet. Posterity will ever reproach him with the sacrifice of Patkul, formerly a subject of Charles, who, being disgraced by that prince, threw himself into the armies of the Saxon, had well and faithfully served him, and was basely delivered up by the Polish sovereign to the resentment of the Swedish monarch, who put him to a cruel and ignominious death. A prince may nobly fall from the throne, when expelled from it by an irresistible force; but meanly to kiss the hand which smites him, and drives him from his seat, is the completion of ignominy in a monarch.

Charles XII. having thus wrested the crown from Frederic-Augustus, determined to confer it on a noble Pole, named A. D. 1704.

Stanislaus

Stanislaus Leczinski. When the diet, however, was assembled for electing a new sovereign, the deputy Icrozalski spoke with great spirit, and exhorted the Poles not to place their timidity upon record, and transmit to posterity the infamous submission they paid to a foreign prince. This bold and unexpected speech considerably embarrassed the Swedish general, who was present in the assembly, and who threatened to reduce the deputies to reason by force. Nothing, however, could shake their resolution, which seemed to strengthen by opposition. "Here," said they, "let us sacrifice our lives to the free-"dom of our country, and prefer death to the "loss of liberty." At length, the bishop of Posnania, perceiving that nothing could be gained by threats or promises, exclaimed, "Long live Stanislaus Leczinski, elected king "of Poland!" The nomination was echoed by the Swedes, and a few of the nobility; but the deputies entered their protest and retired. Thus was Stanislaus raised to the throne by the influence of a foreign power, without swearing to the pacta conventa.

Charles XII. imposed rigorous conditions on the deposed monarch; and, besides compelling him to acknowledge Stanislaus as the legitimate sovereign of the republic, and to renounce all rights to the crown and dominions of Poland, required him to write a letter of congratulation to the new king, upon his accession to the throne. Augustus complied, and by the style of his epistle evinced his regret, and the violence which was offered to his inclinations. The plea of necessity alone can exculpate him for this condescension; and even that may be deemed

deemed insufficient to rescue his character from the imputation of pusillanimity. Certain it is, the young Swede entertained so mean an opinion of him that, accompanied only by four persons, he went to brave him in the midst of Dresden and of a numerous garrison, and to eat and converse familiarly with him, while the dethroned monarch dared not to testify to him any other sentiments than those of astonishment and respect.

The event of the battle of Pultowa determined Augustus to avow his intentions of breaking the treaty he had contracted with Charles XII. and of re-ascending the throne of Poland. He, therefore, published a manifesto in justification of his conduct, in which he mentioned the arbitrary and oppressive proceedings of the king of Sweden, reasoned on the nullity of the election of Stanislaus, declared his intention of re-establishing himself on the throne of Poland, and concluded with requesting the assistance of all Christian kings and princes. In the mean time, Stanislaus, who saw himself abandoned by his friends, his protector a fugitive, and his rival supported by the most powerful monarch of the north, was no sooner informed of the approach of Augustus to the dominions of the republic than he declared that, as he had taken the sceptre with no other view than the preservation of liberty, he was now ready to restore it, provided that sacrifice would promote the tranquillity and peace of his country.

Accordingly, having abdicated the throne, Augustus was re-appointed king of Poland. Stanislaus, who was of a mild and humane disposition, was rewarded for A. D. 1709.

those

those virtues by the good fortune of his daughter, who was married to Louis XV. king of France. A donation being made to him of the duchy of Lorraine, he there led a peaceful and retired life in the midst of the arts which he had admired, and with all the honours of sovereignty unattended by its burdens. On the contrary, Frederic Augustus reigned in the midst of factions. Conspiracies were formed against both his power and his life. He was, nevertheless, a good father, a good husband, a sociable companion, and distinguished by such manners as suit a republic.

A. D. 1733. On the death of Frederic-Augustus, Stanislaus Leczinski was re-elected king of Poland; but the emperor of Germany and the czar of Russia declaring the election void, the elector of Saxony, son of the late Polish monarch, was raised to the throne, under the name of Augustus III. Though Stanislaus was favoured yet too little supported by France, whose monarch, Louis XV. had espoused his daughter, he was obliged to relinquish his pursuit. Nor did he, without incurring a thousand dangers, escape from the Russian and Saxon armies, which had united in favour of his competitor. It was not, however, till his title had been recognised by an assembly called the "diet of pacification," that Frederic-Augustus III. was universally acknowledged as king of Poland. After those first shocks, the reign of this monarch was tranquil and peaceable.

A. D. 1763. On the death of Frederic-Augustus III. which took place on the fifth of October, his son, who was become elector of Saxony, sued for the crown which had been [illegible]

by his father. At this time Russia, by the permanent conquest of Livonia, by her influence in Courland, and by her prodigious military force, might be said to have acquired a domineering and almost irresistible ascendancy in the affairs of Poland. Prussia, after a war of seven years, sustained under circumstances of unparalleled inferiority, had extricated herself, and was become a power of the first consideration. The peace of Hubertsburg left the Prussian monarch at liberty to turn his views and efforts towards Warsaw. The deep and capacious mind of his brother, prince Henry, had seized and digested in silence the project of the partition of Poland. He communicated his ideas on the subject to Frederic, who, after expressing his admiration of it in theory, was brought over to his opinion; and they began to concert measures for the completion of the plan.

The first step taken by the Prussian monarch in this affair, was artfully to flatter the new empress of Russia, to awaken her vanity, and to represent to her the honour, as well as the advantage, of giving a sovereign to Poland, after having placed herself on the throne of the czars. Catharine, who was anxious for every species of glory, listened with pleasure to suggestions, which were calculated to make impressions on her ambitious mind. Impelled by her partiality for count Poniatowski, and, perhaps, likewise induced by her perfect knowledge of his character, she signified to Frederic her intention of elevating him to the throne. The court of Berlin having approved of the choice, Catharine's forces and treasures overcame all opposi-

A. D. 1764. tion. On the sixth of September, that candidate, supported by two powers, mounted by violence the throne of Poland; while the Russian ambassador, prince Repnin, became in fact the despot and the oppressor of the Poles.

CHAP. IV.

From the Accession of Stanislaus Augustus Poniatowski, the last King of Poland, to the present Time.

IF ever any sovereign had reason to think his crown heavy and beset with thorns, Stanislaus Augustus Poniatowski stood in that predicament. Born of a noble Polish family, his election, though effected by violence, might be considered as not more illegal than the three preceding ones; in each of which, Saxon, Swedish, or Muscovite troops, aided by gold, had raised the pretender, whose cause they espoused, to the throne of Poland. Apprehensive lest the monarchical party should prevail over the republican, in the mixt government of that country, the diets had during a whole century attentively laboured to circumscribe the king's authority within very narrow limits, and to diminish the revenues, and weaken the army of the crown. Poniatowski, therefore, on his accession to the throne, found himself destitute of money and of troops. The unfortunate king retained little more of royalty than the name, and seemed only an instrument in the hands of the court of Petersburg.

The

The Prussian monarch, attentive to the accomplishment of his object, and who by no means intended that Poland should sink virtually into a Russian province, fomented discontent among the Polish nobility, and secretly stimulated them to throw off so ignominious a yoke, and to dethrone a prince, who was illegally elected, and who could not protect them against the tyranny of Catharine. The insinuations of Frederic were successful; and Poland soon became a theatre of civil war, of insurrection, and devastation. In order to maintain Stanislaus on the throne, the empress quartered Muscovites and Cossacs in all the principal cities; while Warsaw resembled rather a Russian garrison, than the capital of an independent republic; and the troops equally awed the sovereign whom she had created, and the nation which she oppressed. Accustomed as the Poles had ever been to external interference, they were not broken down to slavery. Resistance, confederations, insurrections, and civil war under every form, desolated the country; while the king remained a passive and helpless spectator of the multiplied calamities inflicted on his unfortunate subjects.

In Poland were a number of sects, all comprised under the general appellation of *dissidents*. The prevailing religion endeavoured by every possible means to suppress the dissidents, who, on their part, incessantly laboured to extend themselves. The catholics, however, who were the more ancient and more numerous party, would have been victorious over their rivals, had not the neighbouring powers interfered in the quarrel. Russia and Prussia caused to be

presented to the king a memorial in favour of the dissidents, for whom they demanded, in an imperious and peremptory manner, an indefinite freedom of worship, accompanied with every privilege which could render them equal to the catholics. Stanislaus, considerably embarrassed by this requisition, after several fruitless negociations undertaken for the purpose of approximating the parties, referred the business to the decision of a general diet, which met at Warsaw, and by a great majority rejected the demands of the dissidents.

A. D. 1768.

But the latter being supported in their pretensions by the two protecting powers, not considering themselves as finally defeated, formed confederacies in several provinces, and demanded that a new diet should be convened. Accordingly, an assembly was held in the following year at Warsaw, under the canon of the Russians, who, on this occasion, employed the greatest violence. They seized the bishops of Cracow and of Kiow, several senators, and a number of grandees, who were carried off and immured in Russian fortresses; and the dissidents obtained every thing they wished. They immediately prepared to enter upon the enjoyment of the privileges, which had been forcibly procured, and which the catholics still refused to grant. Force was opposed to force; and as the dissidents had confederated themselves, the others also formed what was called the *Confederation of Bar*, from the place where they assembled. Every individual wore his distinctive badge; and no longer was it allowed to any man to stand neuter.

During these multiplied calamities, Poland exhibited

exhibited a scene of mortality, insurrection, and carnage. Many thousands died of the plague. The confederate nobles, who maintained the illegality of the king's election, endeavoured at once to depose him, and to expel their oppressors the Russians. Pecuniary supplies were furnished to them by Saxony; and the plunder of such provinces or towns as refused to join them contributed to support their troops. The flames were fanned by the cabinet of Berlin, and the insurgents were indirectly assisted with men or money by France or Austria. But, though Catharine was embarrassed by the war, in which the Prussian monarch had contrived to engage her with the Turks, she repressed the Poles, cut in pieces their confederacies, and asserted her superiority. The country was now reduced to so wretched a state, that Stanislaus scarcely esteemed himself safe in Warsaw, and durst not venture a league from his capital. His situation, it must be confessed, was the most helpless and humiliating that can well be conceived. Owing his crown solely to the power and influence of Russia, the least murmur, on his part, against the oppressors of his country, might have precipitated him from the eminence to which he had been raised. Even his remonstrances to their outrages were treated with neglect, or heard with indifference.

On the other hand, he had no resource in the loyalty or affection of his subjects. To the confederates, who denied his title, and detested his person, he could not fly for refuge. Such, indeed, was the antipathy they had conceived against him, that they resolved to put him to death, as the primary author of all the calami-

ties, which had befallen their country, and as a man wholly dependent on Catharine II. who was their enemy and their tyrant. They executed their purpose in part with astonishing audacity and success; though it is difficult to conceive what advantage could have accrued to them, or to Poland, by the destruction of Stanislaus, had it been effected; for the empress would easily have substituted another phantom of royalty, had one been found requisite; and her numerous forces would have suppressed every effort on their part at emancipation.

A. D. 1771. As the king was returning, on the third of November, about nine o'clock at night, from paying a visit to his uncle, who lived about a quarter of a mile from the palace, he was surrounded in one of the most frequented and populous streets of Warsaw, by a band of assassins; who, having compelled the postilion to stop, fired a number of shots into the carriage, several of which passed through his majesty's fur cloak. The night being extremely dark, Stanislaus endeavoured to make his escape, but was seized by the assassins, who exclaimed, with horrible execrations, "We "have thee now; thy hour is come!" One of them discharged a pistol at him so close, that he felt the heat of the flash; another cut him across the head with his sabre, which penetrated to the skull. They dragged him between their horses at full gallop, through the streets of Warsaw, without encountering any impediment or opposition. A Russian sentinel, who was at some distance, and heard the noise, called to them; but as they answered, or pretended to answer, in his own language, he allowed them to pass.

The

The assassins perceiving that the king was not able to follow them longer on foot, and that he had almost lost his respiration from the violence with which he had been dragged along, set him on horseback. They then redoubled their speed, and arriving at the ditch or lines which surround Warsaw, compelled him to leap his horse across, in performing which the animal broke his leg. Having thus surmounted the principal difficulties, and got clear of the city, each was anxious to claim his respective share of merit in the execution of the enterprize. They immediately began to plunder him, and took away the ribband of the order of the "Black Eagle," which Stanislaus wore round his neck, and the diamond cross appendant to it. These they carried to the confederates, as proofs that the king was a prisoner in their hands, and on his way to the army, and committed his majesty to the care of seven of the band. These, however, losing their way, the king was left with only one of the assassins, who, on the promise of Stanislaus of pardon and preservation, was at length induced to conduct him to a place of safety. Many of the guilty actors of this scene were afterwards taken and put to death.

To the intended assassination of Stanislaus succeeded, in the following year, the actual partition of his dominions. Frederic III. having completely embroiled the Russians and Turks, at the same time that the Poles, exhausted by confederacies, added to the ravages of the plague, were incapable of resistance, turned his attention to the court of Vienna, without whose consent and co-operation nothing could be effected. In a second interview at Neustadt in Moravia, between

between the Prussian monarch and Joseph II. emperor of Germany, who was accompanied by prince Kaunitz, the Austrian minister, the subject was fully discussed, and Frederic succeeded in persuading the others of the policy or necessity of a partition of Poland. They spread before them a map of the ill-fated country, agreed on their respective shares, and fixed on the tract of territory to be offered to the empress of Russia. These preliminaries being adjusted, the Austrian and Prussian ministers at Petersburg signified to Catharine the determination of the courts of Vienna and Berlin, and insinuated, that if she refused to participate in the spoil, their sovereigns knew how to compel her to accede to the partition by force. The empress, who was engaged in a war with the Porte, which occupied all her forces, and drained her treasury, could not but acquiesce in the pro-

A. D. 1772. Every part, therefore, of the villanous plan being thus arranged between the three royal conspirators, proper manifestoes were prepared; and, at a time when nothing less was expected, they were seen, during a season of profound peace, to introduce, each on his side, an army into Poland. The manifestoes then published drew a picture of the evils which afflicted this unhappy country—murders, conflagrations, violences of every kind, fanaticism, anarchy, which attacked public safety, ruined commerce, and injured agriculture. It was then added that, "from the natural connections "existing between conterminous nations, the "countries adjoining to Poland, experience the "disagreeable effects of those disorders. Dur-

"ing

"ing several years back, they have been obliged "to adopt the most expensive measures for se- "curing the tranquillity of their frontiers. In "circumstances so critical, the courts of Vienna, "Petersburg, and Berlin, apprehensive lest "the domestic dissentions of Poland should pro- "duce changes in the political system of Eu- "rope; unwilling, moreover, to abandon to "the chance of events several provinces of the "republic, to which the three powers have "considerable claims, which *they will justify in "proper time and place*; having, therefore, re- "spectively communicated to each other their "rights and pretensions, and *reciprocally satis- "fied each other thereon*; make known that they "are prepared to possess themselves of an equi- "valent, which shall be regulated in such man- "ner as henceforward to establish, between Po- "land and the neighbouring powers, more cer- "tain and natural boundaries than those which "have heretofore existed. And, in considera- "tion of that equivalent, the three courts re- "nounce all demands, pretensions, claims of in- "demnification, and interests, which they might "otherwise form against the pretensions of the "republic."

Such were the titles on which was founded the partitionary policy of these continental despots, and which is without precedent in modern history. Thus was Poland deprived of large and fertile provinces, which contained above seven thousand square leagues of territory, and five millions of inhabitants, and forced to relinquish one-half of her annual income, by the arts and arms of Russia, Austria, and Prussia. In vain did Stanislaus endeavour to protract the dismemberment

memberment of his country. His struggles only manifested to all Europe the helpless condition of the Polish sovereign and nation. The three partitioning powers compelled him to convoke a diet, which they surrounded with troops; and, though this unfortunate sovereign was conscious of the personal dishonour which he would incur by lending himself to such a proceeding, he was at length obliged to ratify his own degradation, by giving to their usurpations the mock sanction of legislative and deliberative consent. In this instance, we must not too severely condemn him for his want of resolution, which could only have been ruinous to himself, without producing any benefit to his country.

A. D. 1773.

Another meeting, which was held under the same precautions as the former, gave to Poland a constitution which revived the abuses of the government; and, among others, the *liberum veto*: a privilege favourable to the fomentation of faction, and incompatible with the principles of real liberty. The misfortunes and partition of this unfortunate country had, however, convinced all enlightened persons of the defects of their anarchical government, the danger of an elective monarchy, and the necessity of reforming abuses, which, notwithstanding the valour of the Polish nation, rendered it a slave to all its neighbours.

A. D. 1775.

Taking advantage, therefore, of a favourable opportunity that presented itself, when the two imperial courts were engaged in war with the Turks, and when the kings of Prussia and England, wishing to encrease the embarrassments of Austria and Russia,

A. D. 1788.

sia, excited the Poles to this measure, they convened an assembly of the people. Never was there seen more concord in the wishes, more unanimity in the deliberations; nor more devotedness in the sacrifices: the nobles renounced their pretensions to the throne; they opened to the middling classes the avenue to every employment; and all the citizens contributed to create an artillery, and pay an army. At length appeared the constitution of the 3d of May, which was the result of a diet, equally wise in its operations, and enlightened in its patriotism. All the governments of Europe congratulated Stanislaus and the Polish nation, on this revolution, which rendered the throne hereditary, and sufficiently limited the regal power. A. D. 1791.

The empress of Russia, alone, opposing her personal resentment to the general approbation, resolved to overturn a constitution which released Poland from her yoke, and wrested its prey from her ambition. Frederic-William II. who had applauded and sanctioned the measures adopted by the republic, and had promised to assist the Poles in case of hostilities, abandoned them to the resentment of Catharine. Under pretence of aiding some disaffected nobles, who were enraged at being deprived of their pretensions to the throne, she marched a strong army into Poland, and induced Stanislaus to receive the Russians as friends and allies. A. D. 1792.

On the sixth of January, the king of Prussia, with unblushing effrontery, and in direct contradiction to the letters which he had himself written, both officially and privately, A. D. 1793.

vately, to the unfortunate king, asserted that the change of government in Poland had been effected without the knowledge of the neighbouring friendly powers. In concert, therefore, with the courts of Vienna and Petersburg, in order to anticipate designs which seemed fatal to his interests, he had resolved, he said, to send a sufficient body of troops into the territories of the republic, and particularly into Great Poland, where the proceedings of the patriots were more open and avowed. Accordingly the Prussian forces advanced to Thorn; and, being refused entrance, attacked and broke down the gate, and dislodged the municipal guard. This defenceless city exhibited the spectacle of a place taken by assault; and, while the troops entered it, the air resounded with their triumphant acclamations. Dantzick also submitted soon after to the Prussians, and a garrison of seventeen hundred men was quartered upon the inhabitants.

During these violent and perfidious proceedings, the confederated Poles, on the third of February, published a protest against the entrance of the Prussian troops, and declared they would enter into no views, which might tend to dismember any part of the Polish territories; but, on the contrary, were ready to sacrifice the last drop of their blood in defence of their liberties and independence. They concluded by hoping, that even the two imperial courts, and all other powers, would not behold with indifference a manifest violation of the rights of nations, and the open invasion of the dominions of a neighbouring and friendly state.

The farther partition of this unfortunate country

try was now rapidly approaching. It was preceded by manifestoes from the royal robbers, justifying, or attempting to justify, this shameless division of their plunder by shrewd political pretences. The declaration of the emperor of Germany, which was dated the 14th of February, was expressed in terms of great forbearance, but contained an absolute injunction to the Poles, resident within his dominions, quietly to regard the impending dismemberment of their country. In March appeared the manifesto of her imperial majesty, which called in the aid of religion to sanction this atrocious act of rapine and injustice. As an indemnification for her losses, to provide for the future safety of the empire, and to prevent all future changes of government, the empress graciously made known her intention to take for ever under the sceptre of Russia, certain tracts of land and their inhabitants, specified in the manifesto. In this partition, the increase of the happiness of the people was asserted to be the *sole object* of her imperial majesty. What a religious regard to truth did the declaration of this pious and upright princess exhibit! The manifesto of his Prussian majesty, which was published during the same month, echoed many of the former sentiments; and avowed that, in order to preserve the republic of Poland from the dreadful effects of internal dissention, and to rescue it from utter ruin, no other means remained than to incorporate her frontier provinces into the states of Prussia. He, therefore, designated the territory intended for that purpose, and exhorted the people within that boundary to become loyal and obedient subjects to Prussia, and

to renounce all connection with the crown of [illegible].

[illegible]ng published these manifestoes, the ministers of Berlin and Petersburg delivered notes to the Polish diet, and demanded the appointment of a deputation to sanction the intended division of the country, which produced violent altercations. At length, M. de Sievers, the Russian ambassador, ordered two battalions of grenadiers, with four pieces of cannon, to surround the castle, and declared that no member should be permitted to quit the senate, till the diet had consented to the treaty of partition. Surrounded by an armed force, and threatened with another invasion of Prussian troops, the Poles were compelled to authorise a deputation to sign the convention for the division of their country.

The imperious conduct of the Russians, during their struggle for power, continued to harrass the oppressed Poles, and to drive them to desperation. The peasants were compelled to lodge and board the Russian soldiers, and to transport them from one place to another, without receiving the least remuneration, or any other return than brutality and insolence. The nobility and gentry were obliged to furnish every necessary for the army, at a price fixed by the Russians. It was not to be expected that a gallant and highly spirited people would tamely submit to a conduct which was calculated to excite the indignation and vengeance of the greatest cowards. Nor would it occasion surprise, that there should be an explosion, not proceeding as was artfully and basely pretended, from a jacobin faction, but from a virtuous endeavou

of a generous nation against the unparalleled oppression of an enemy; who, not satisfied with the atrocities of which she had been guilty, continued to plunge her poniards in the breasts of those whom her ambition had plundered and degraded. The patriotic and martial spirit of the Poles, which, though smothered, had not been extinguished, was excited into action by incessant sufferings, and by the efforts of the brave and intrepid Kosciusko, who, sprung from a noble family, exhibited in his countenance the energy of his character, and united all the qualities that can confer glory, and merit reputation. Indefatigable, incorruptible, firm in adversity, moderate in prosperity, cool in the midst of danger, feeling for misfortune, generous towards his enemies, zealous in the love of his country, a strict observer of justice, even during civil war and the fury of parties; bold in his designs, resolute in his enterprizes, and rapid in his operations: he communicated his ardour to his companions, directed their exertions, modestly attributed to them all his success, and inspired at the same time respect by his regularity, and attachment by his amenity. Thus was he esteemed by the soldiers, the peasants, the gentry, and the nobles: he conciliated opposite interests, destroyed rivalship, and, rallying all parties, directed their energy towards his sole object—the emancipation of his country.

He corresponded secretly with the court of Warsaw, and with all those who were exciting a movement which he wished to effect, and gave them the instructions requisite for the success of this great undertaking. At length, in the month

A. D. 1794. of March, Madalinski, one of the constitutional deputies of 1791 erected the standard of revolt, and with eight hundred cavalry traversing the country usurped by Frederic William, attacked the Prussian troops who opposed his passage, and penetrated into the palatinate of Cracovia, whither Kosciusko arrived from Saxony. All the citizens of Cracow assembled and signed the act of insurrection, and elected Kosciusko their general, who swore to be faithful to the nation, and to observe the laws and regulations that had been enacted; and the garrison took the oath of fidelity to the nation, and obedience to their leader.

Frederic-William, being informed of the Polish insurrection, determined to fight in person, and marched into Poland at the head of forty thousand troops. The intrepid Kosciusko having the boldness to attack so formidable an army, to which he could only oppose twelve thousand men, was defeated, and compelled to retreat into an entrenched camp, which covered Warsaw. The Prussian monarch having joined the Russians, invested the capital; and, in order to reduce that city and subdue the troops that defended it, employed all the means of force and all the wiles of policy; but the Poles proved themselves alike superior to fear and flattery. After continual and bloody engagements, which were not decisive, the king of Prussia commanded a general attack, in order to force the Polish entrenchments. The action was long and obstinate; and Frederic-William, and the prince-royal displayed, on this occasion, great courage and bravery; but the resolution of the

insurgents

insurgents triumphed over the valour of the Russians and Prussians, and compelled them to retire with loss.

Being informed that the Russian general, Fersen, meditated a junction with the forces of Suwarrow, Kosciusko immediately marched against him, and ordered Poniatowski to dispute the passage of the river with the enemy. This latter, however, suffered them to cross without molestation, and did not rejoin the main army with his division. The commander in chief deprived of this succour was attacked by general Fersen; and, though the Russians were thrice the number of the Poles, the victory was disputed during a whole day with the greatest vigour and resolution. Twice did the valiant Kosciusko repulse the enemy; and displayed, in this action, the talents of a general and the bravery of a soldier. The prodigies of valour which he performed rendered victory a long time uncertain; but he fell pierced with wounds, and with him fell the fortunes of his country. He was taken prisoner by the Cossacs; who were no sooner informed of his being Kosciusko than they testified their admiration of his courage, and their pity for his misfortunes. Opening his eyes, he learned his defeat, and in vain implored to be put to death, which he preferred to captivity. The Russians treated him with the respect due to his character; and, as soon as he could endure the fatigue of travelling, sent him to Petersburg, where the empress, too much irritated to be generous, confined this unfortunate warrior in a dungeon, from which he was not liberated till after the death of Catharine II. Paul I. signalised the

commencement of his reign by granting him his freedom, and this magnanimous act of the emperor obtained the applause of surrounding nations.

The Poles, being informed of this tragical event, testified by loud lamentations their esteem for the talents and virtues of Kosciusko, and listened with confidence to the advice which he gave them from the place of his captivity; for they were convinced that no menace could induce him to propose a measure, which was derogatory to his own glory, and that of his country. Even while the Russians besieged the capital, all the streets of Warsaw were illuminated on the birth-day of their unfortunate general; and the Poles celebrated the remembrance of his triumphs on the very eve of their destruction.

The victory of Fersen did not abate the public ardour: the most vigorous measures were adopted by the national council for the defence of liberty, and Wawrzecky was appointed commander in chief. But, though the courage of the Poles was unabated, the same genius did not preside over their operations: the Russians defeated Zayontechik at Chelm; and Suwarrow, having almost annihilated the Polish army at Brezesk, advanced rapidly towards Warsaw. Instead of imitating the prudent conduct of Kosciusko, who always kept the field, the republicans retired within the fortifications of the suburbs of Prague. Suwarrow attacked the place, and, after a murderous assault, made himself master of the city. Nine thousand gallant Poles perished in this bloody action: but the carnage which succeeded the victory must for

for ever tarnish the honours of the Russian general. The houses were pillaged, women violated, children murdered, and thirty thousand victims fell a prey to the vengeance and ferocity of the Russian soldiers. The inhabitants of Warsaw, who were destitute of all means of defence, were obliged to capitulate, and sent Ignatius Polocki to negociate a treaty with the conquerors. The terms he proposed were rejected; and Stanislaus Augustus, who retained no more influence with his neighbours than authority over his subjects, in vain endeavoured to obtain mild and honourable conditions: the city was compelled to yield to the *mercy* of Catharine. The Polish troops, refusing to submit, quitted Warsaw; but, being attacked on all sides by the Russians and Prussians, some were killed, some were dispersed, and others delivered up their arms to the conquerors. Madalinski, with a few resolute followers, fled into Gallicia.[3] Suwarrow promised a complete amnesty, which Catharine did not fulfil. She ordered the Polish chiefs to be arrested, proscribed all those distinguished by their patriotism, confiscated their property, and erected a terrible inquisition that pursued their actions, watched their thoughts, and punished this unfortunate nation for all the virtues which it had displayed.

Relieved from all obstacles, the courts of Vienna, Berlin, and Petersburg quietly divided their ensanguined prey, and wished to annihilate even the name of Poland: but history will eternize the glory of the vanquished, and the baseness, injustice, and tyranny of the victors. By an act signed at Petersburg on the third of January, and communicated to A. D. 1795.

all

all the powers of Europe, the three potentates designated the limits of their possessions in Poland, which they entirely appropriated to themselves*.

From that moment, Poland, which had during more than one thousand years figured in Europe as an independent and frequently a formidable state, was degraded from her condition and deprived of that title. On the sixth of January, the courts of Vienna, Petersburg, and Berlin, published an act by which they engaged to extinguish, by different means, the debts of Poland, to discharge those of the king, to secure to him the enjoyment of all his patrimonial or acquired property, and to allow him an annual pension of two hundred thousand ducats. He received orders to fix his residence at Grodno, from whence the czar Paul I. on his accession to the throne, invited the ill-fated monarch to Petersburg—a scene that must doubtless have recalled to his mind the adventures of his youth, which seemed to promise a happier destiny.' He survived only a short time the fall of his throne, and the humiliation of his country. He died of an appoplexy, at Petersburg, on the 11th of April, O. S. It was destined that the same hand which had presented should bereave him of his

A. D. 1797.

A. D. 1798.

* Brezesk became the central point of the frontiers of these states. Warsaw fell under the dominion of the Prussian monarch. The Vistula divided Prussia from Austria. The Bog separated Austria from Russia. The Neimen marked the limits between the Russian and Prussian possessions; and one half of the city of Grodno belonged to the king of Prussia, and the other to the empress of Russia.

crown;

crown; and he would have lost it somewhat sooner, had it not been for the generous intervention of Potemkin, who saw, conversed with, and conceived an ardent friendship for his majesty, during the excursion of the empress to the Crimea.

The character of Stanislaus Augustus Poniatowski, the last king of Poland, is neither difficult to understand nor to delineate. As a man and an individual, he was certainly more amiable, and more the object of attachment and respect, than when considered in his regal capacity. In his youth, his person was handsome, graceful, and elegant. Never was a prince more gracious, easy, and affable in his manners and address; which was the result of natural disposition, not the effect of artifice. But, when we contemplate him as a monarch, he evidently sinks in our estimation: he was amiable, not great; engaging, not imposing. Equally deficient in the strong powers of discernment, and in the vigour of mind which his situation demanded, he was not calculated to direct the storm by which he was assailed and finally destroyed. He possessed rather a lively and pleasing than a solid and penetrating understanding. The facility of his nature exposed him to deception; and the flexibility of his temper was abused by favourites, who acquired and retained an ascendancy over him. He supposed himself to resemble Henry IV. of France, in the leading features of his mind and body; but, though some resemblance might be traced in the circumstances of the two sovereigns, Stanislaus unfortunately did not equal the French monarch

monarch in wisdom, firmness, heroic valour, discernment, and above all, in frugality; and his talents were more calculated for the calm than the tempest:—for domestic privacy, than for the intrigues and bustle of a court.

SWEDEN.

CHAP. I.

Description of Sweden, and its history till the Accession of Eric XII.

THE kingdom of Sweden includes that extensive tract of country which lies between Denmark, Norway, and Russia; and which is bounded on the east by Russia, the Baltic, and the gulph of Finland; on the south, by the Baltic and Sound; on the west, by the Desart and the impassable mountains of Norway; and on the north by Norwegian Lapland. It extends from fifty-five degrees and thirty minutes to sixty-nine degrees of north latitude; and from the twelfth to the thirty-second degree of east longitude from London: being about one thousand four hundred miles in length, and nine hundred and twenty in breadth.

The air of Sweden is extremely salubrious; but the winters are long and severe. In the midst, however, of the brumal season, the splendor of the moon, the reflection of the snow, and the lucid brightness of the sky, render the nights less tedious, and even give beauty to them. At Stockholm, on the longest day, when the heat is most intense, the sun continues above the horizon about eighteen hours and a half: but the nights are luminous and pleasant; and travelling is equally eligible during the night as the

the day. In this climate violent storms of wind and rain are seldom experienced, and the sky is commonly clear and serene. Summer suddenly succeeds winter; and vegetation is considerably more rapid than in many more southern climates. This season, however, is of short duration, and seldom continues longer than three months; when the assistance of stoves and warm furs is again found necessary, to mitigate the severity of the cold.

Sweden exhibits extensive woods and unfrequented forests, which produce pines, fir, beech, birch, alder, juniper, and oak; and which afford fuel in the most plentiful manner, at the cheapest rate, and also furnish an important article of exportation. In those places where agriculture is practicable, the soil is abundantly fertile, though seldom more than half a foot in depth; and it is common to plough the ground with a single ox. Since the reign of Charles the twelfth, the Swedes have been at incredible pains to correct the natural sterility of their country; and their labours have in general been attended with great success: but, notwithstanding their utmost exertions, they have never been able to grow a quantity of corn sufficient for the national consumption. Wheat, rye, barley, oats, peas, and beans are produced in Gothland; but the natives in many places, either on account of a want of industry or of an unhappy situation, are under the necessity of procuring corn from Livonia and the provinces of the Baltic. During the summer season, nature appears extremely agreeable, the fields are clothed with a variety of flowers; and even the most barren rocks yield strawberries, raspberries, and other small fruits.

The delicious productions, however, of warmer climes are almost unknown in this country: the Swedes seldom cultivate apricots, peaches, nectarines, and pine-apples with success; but melons, especially in favourable seasons, are brought to great perfection.

The principal wealth of Sweden consists in its mines, many of which are excellent and valuable. Incredible quantities of silver, copper, lead, and iron, have been extracted out of the earth; and the last-mentioned metal furnishes employment for nearly five hundred hammering-mills, forges, and smelting houses. A gold mine has also been discovered in this country; but its produce and value are greatly inadequate to the labour required for purifying the ore. One of the silver-mines is of prodigious dimensions: its first gallery is one hundred fathoms below the surface of the earth; the roof is supported by vast oaken beams, and from thence the miners descend about forty fathoms farther, before they arrive at the lower vein. There are no records extant, by which the antiquity of this mine can be exactly ascertained; but it is evident that it has been wrought for several ages, and its annual produce is said to be about twenty thousand crowns. Though the copper-mines are of vast extent, their product is uncertain; but they are burthened with many taxes and deductions to the government, which finds this the principal resource in every exigence of the state. These subterraneous mansions being capacious beyond conception, and at the same time commodious for their inhabitants, the miners, either from habit or interest, frequently seem happy and contented in their hidden world. The mines at Danmora are celebrated for producing the finest

iron ore of any in Europe, and constitute one of the most important sources of national wealth and revenue. Gunpowder is made use of for extracting the ore in these mines, and this operation, which is performed every day at noon, is the most tremendious and awful that can possibly be conceived: by the violence of the powder, stones are thrown to an incredible height, above the surface of the earth; and the concussion is so great as to shake every object to a considerable extent. In these mines are no less than three hundred men constantly employed; and the pay of each amounts only to a common dollar, or three pence English, a day.

Swedish Lapland is a rude and hideous country, abounding with rocks and mountains, which are covered with everlasting snow. The barren heaths and sandy deserts, the intense severity of the winter, the length of the brumal nights, and the immeasurable depth of snow which covers this solitary region, might seem sufficient to deter any human creature from fixing his abode here: contrary, however, to expectation, this tract of territory is not only peopled, but the natives appear to be perfectly satisfied and contented with their situation. Describing the climate of Lapland, M. Maupertuis says, "If we opened the door of a warm room, the external air, rushing in, instantly converted all the tepid vapour into snow, whirling it round in white vortexes. If we ventured abroad, the air seemed to be tearing our breasts to pieces; and the cracking of the wood of which the houses are built, as if split by the frost, continually alarmed us with an increase of cold. The frost, which is always intense, sometimes increases by such violent and sudden fits, as proves almost infalli-

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bly fatal to those who are so unfortunate as to be exposed to it; and you may frequently behold people who have lost a leg, or an arm, on such an occasion. The winds seem to blow from all quarters at once, and drive about the snow with such fury, that all the roads are in a moment rendered invisible: and dreadful, indeed, is the situation of a person surprized in the fields by such a storm. His knowledge of the country, and even the mark he may have taken by the trees, cannot avail: he is blinded by the snow, and, in attempting to find his way, is generally lost." Winter reigns in Lapland during ten months in the year: and, during the remaining part, the sun scarcely ever sets. No sooner does summer warm the air, than swarms of flies and gnats burst into existence, and fixing on every part of the human body which is exposed, bite with unremitting fury. The Laplanders travel in sledges drawn over the snow by rein-deer, which sometimes carry them ninety miles a day.

Sweden is a monarchy, formerly subject to the states which assembled every third year, but is now rendered arbitrary and despotic. The royal titles are, King of the Goths and Vandals, Great Prince of Finland, and Duke of Schonen, &c. The laws in general seem to be marked with wisdom. The barbarous and inhuman practice of duelling is justly punished with exemplary severity. When one of the combatants is killed, the other is put to death; and the memory of each is branded with infamy and disgrace. If neither fall, they are confined for two years, and during that period fed on nothing but bread and water. Personal insults are, therefore, submitted to the national courts, who usually adjudge recantation and begging pardon in public.

The early part of the history of Sweden is fabulous and absurd, and involved in much doubt and obscurity. All writers, however, agree that ancient Scandinavia was at first governed by judges, who were elected for a certain time by the suffrages of the people. This in particular was the form of government adopted by Sweden, which was divided into a number of small principalities till the time of Eric, when the merit and popularity of those princes induced their constituents to elevate them to the sovereignty of the whole country, and to unite the prerogatives of all their temporary power in the person of one king, who should reign during life, or till it became necessary to divest him of his authority and regal insignia.

Passing over the fabulous and obscure part of the Swedish history, we shall observe that in the reign of Biorno III. who ascended the throne in the year 831, the gospel was first preached in this country by Anscharius, a pious monk, sent into Sweden by Louis the Debonnaire. Great numbers of the Swedish nobility were converted to Christianity, and Anscharius baptized the people by hundreds at a time; and the king not only embraced the Christian religion himself, but used all his influence in the propagation of the faith.

While the Swedes glowed with the first fervor inspired by their conversion, a dreadful famine ravaged the kingdom, and the people imagined that it might be occasioned by the resentment of their former gods, who were incensed at the universal dereliction of their worship. They, therefore, endeavoured to persuade Olaus, who at that time governed the kingdom, to renew the accustomed sacrifices to them, and, on his refusal to comply with their desire, put him to death.

Every

Every thing at that period was in extremes: one prince was extremely pious; and his successor, perhaps, was a magician.

Eric IX. surnamed the Holy, founded numerous monasteries, promulgated admirable laws, and caused them to be punctually observed. Many, however, were of opinion that his zeal was carried to an imprudent excess, and that under his reign religion had degenerated into bigotry and superstition; and justice was extended to rigour and even cruelty. By a compromise with Charles, the son of his immediate predecessor, Eric had obtained the crown of Sweden. He was son-in-law to a former monarch; but his virtues obtained him the preference: with the condition, however, that on his death, the crown should revert to Charles. A. D. 1141.

On the decease of Eric, Charles being supposed an accomplice in the murder of the late king, experienced some difficulties in obtaining possession of the throne, and the Swedes refused to acknowledge him as their sovereign. They wished to bestow the crown on Canute, the son of Eric, who had withdrawn to Norway, on discovering that Charles had conspired against his life. Although Charles found himself firmly seated on the throne of Sweden, and determined to merit his prosperity by strictly fulfilling his engagement. Accordingly, he recalled Canute from Norway, settled the succession agreeably to the treaty between him and Eric, and declared the son of that prince presumptive heir to the crown. A. D. 1160.

Whatever were the means Charles made use of for acquiring dominion, his conduct sufficiently testified that he was capable of ruling with pru-

dence and discretion. His reign was pacific; and his government in general unexceptionable. But, being warmly devoted to the see of Rome, whose influence had been greatly instrumental in placing him on the throne, in gratitude for that service, he granted to the sovereign pontiff the entire inheritance of every Swede who should die without posterity; and a certain portion of the property of those who left issue.

Canute Ericson, not chusing to wait the death of Charles, whose successor he had been appointed, and refusing the invitation of that prince, levied forces in Norway; and, returning suddenly into Sweden, surprized Charles, took him prisoner, and condemned him to death. It is not clearly known whether that sentence was dictated by justice or ambition. Certainly Canute is not free from the imputation of having suffered himself to be governed by the latter; and of having shown little delicacy in his choice of the means of gratifying it. In other respects, he has the character of a great king; and his memory figures with honour in the annals of Sweden.

A. D. 1192. On the death of Canute, his son Suercher was raised to the throne of Sweden; on condition that the sceptre should, after the decease of the latter, pass to Eric, the son of Charles. To remove every impediment to the

A. D. 1210. peace and tranquillity of the kingdom, and to confirm the arrangement which had been made, Eric espoused Suercher's daughter, and named as his successor that prince's son John, his brother-in-law. His reign was pacific and happy; and at his death he was

A. D. 1220. succeeded by John, who governed three years with great wisdom. He commenced some military operations, which were attended

tended with less success than the justice of his cause, and the prudence of his measures, seemed to merit. He died highly esteemed, and lamented by all who were friends to their country, and lovers of integrity, moderation, and piety.

The treaty of succession still continuing in force, on the death of John, Eric, the son of Eric X. ascended the throne. A. D. 1223. Previously to his accession, this prince was attacked by a paralytic disorder, which deprived him of the use of an arm and a leg, affected his tongue, and caused him to stammer, from whence he obtained the surname of the Stammerer. It moreover gave him an ungraceful appearance, and an air of idiotism, which conveyed a disadvantageous idea of his talents. But he retained all his mental faculties in their full vigour, and gave proofs of his wisdom and bravery in circumstances of difficulty.

There was in Sweden a family of the name of Falkunger, which was so powerful and ambitious as to form designs of obtaining the crown. Eric, hoping to gain over this house to his interest, and to quiet their ambition by his favours, gave his sisters in marriage to two of them, and himself espoused one of their daughters. But, notwithstanding these ties of consanguinity, the ambition of this family could not be checked, and the eldest of the Falkungers, by name Canute, a man endowed with seductive eloquence, and in that respect greatly superior to the Stammerer, obtained a victory over Eric, and obliged him to fly to Denmark. In the absence of the monarch, Canute Falkunger had the address to get himself proclaimed king of Sweden by his adherents;

adherents; but his reign was of short duration. Eric, having raised an army in Denmark, marched against the usurper, combated him, made him prisoner; and inflicted on him the punishment of decapitation. Birger Jerl, another brother-in-law of the king, remained faithful to Eric, and his services were usefully employed in that war. The Swedish monarch also sent him with an army against the Tawastians, a people of Finland, who were immersed in the most absurd idolatry. Having defeated the enemy, he pardoned those who embraced Christianity, and put the rest to the sword; a strange method of convincing the reason, and enlightening the understanding!

A. D. 1251. On the death of Eric, the states of Sweden being convoked for the purpose of electing a new sovereign, Waldemar, the eldest son of Birger Jerl, and nephew of the late king, was raised to the throne by the suffrages of the people. But, being a minor, the administration of affairs was put into the hands of Birger, who acted as regent during the nonage of his son. He formed many excellent institutions, and endeavoured to render his regency illustrious. He built and fortified the city of Stockholm; and revised and corrected that system of laws, which contained all the statutes of the kingdom. In a word, he laboured to raise the renown of his country, secure its felicity, and increase his own reputation.

The house of Flockenger, equally powerful and ambitious as that of Falkunger, beheld with envy the success of a family which had long rivaled them. Birger, knowing their sentiments, treacherously circumvented and beheaded them all,

all, except one, who was called Charles. Though Waldemar was now of age, and the regent grown old, he could not be prevailed on to surrender his authority. At his death, however, the young king assumed the reins of government, and lived in friendship and esteem with his brother, who was named Magnus, and on whom the late regent, at his death, had bestowed a considerable share of power. Waldemar set out on a pilgrimage to Rome and Jerusalem; and, during his absence, entrusted the government to Magnus, who faithfully restored it to his brother after his return. Discord, however, arose between them soon after: nor could the chiefs of the nation devise any other means of preventing the consequences of dissension than that of dividing Sweden, and giving to each a part. Accordingly, they decreed that Waldemar should possess East and West Gothland, with the province of Smaland, and renounce all pretensions to the rest of the kingdom, which was assigned to Magnus. A reconciliation, however, could not be effected between the two brothers, and, contrary to the expectations of those who had adopted the expedient of dividing the country, a civil war ensued. At length Waldemar found himself under the necessity of renouncing the whole kingdom, of which his pusillanimity had proved him unworthy; and, after abdicating the crown by treaty, he retired to Denmark. A. D. 1266.

Magnus, having thus obtained possession of the sceptre, governed with great prudence, and, being esteemed one of the wisest and best of the Swedish sovereigns, obtained the surname of Ladislaus. Previous to his death, Magnus had appointed A. D. 1276. A. D. 1290.

Torke

Torkel Cnutson regent of the kingdom, and guardian of his son, Birger II. who, at the decease of his father, was only eleven years of age. About the year 1302, Birger and his queen were solemnly crowned, and Cnutson resigned his office of regency. Magnus left two other sons, Eric and Waldemar, on whom he had bestowed appanages, which rendered them sufficiently powerful to make war on the king their brother. It is not easy to decide on which side the wrong lay; but the issue proved unfavourable to Birger, who was surprized in his palace, made prisoner, and obliged to resign the crown to Eric.

Being by this act restored to liberty, Birger formed the design not only of recovering his authority, but also of extending his vengeance even to his brothers. During seven years, he fostered the dark project in his bosom; and, in the mean time, lavished on them the most flattering caresses, and beguiled them by every possible mark of confidence and respect. The two brothers, thinking the reconciliation of Birger perfectly sincere, made him a visit at Nicoping, and were received with every appearance of cordiality and affection. Having treated them with magnificence, and loaded them with favours and civilities, the perfidious traitor, during the silence of the night, while they lay in their first sleep, burst into their apartment at the head of a band of ruffians. Waldemar was immediately seized without resistance; but Eric, attempting to defend himself, was pierced with several wounds. Birger poured on his unfortunate brothers a torrent of opprobrious and scoffing language, and ordered them to be loaded with irons, and thrown into a dungeon. He then endeavoured to surprise Stockholm; but the garrison being informed

formed of his design, defeated his troops, and sent a body of forces to besiege Nicoping, where the two princes were confined. But before the place could be taken, Eric died of his wounds, which had remained undressed, and Waldemar perished with hunger.

This atrocious transaction inflamed the minds of the people, and roused all Sweden to arms. Birger recalled his son Magnus from Denmark, obtained a body of auxiliaries from Eric, the king of that country, and endeavoured to maintain with vigour his rights, which he had recovered by means of the greatest perfidy and cruelty. But being defeated in battle, and unable to withstand the universal combination against him, he fled for refuge to the king of Denmark, whose daughter he had married, and who received him only with coldness and indifference. In flying from the vengeance of his subjects, Birger left behind him a son named Magnus, against whom the public indignation was vented, and who, though innocent, was condemned to death by the diet, through hatred of his father.

The assembly of the states being convoked for the election of a new sovereign, the crown was bestowed on Magnus, the son of the unfortunate Eric, although not more than three years old. During his minority, they appointed as his guardian, under the title of protector of the kingdom, Kettlemunsen, who had been a zealous adherent and friend of the two murdered brethren. Under his protectorate, the administration was conducted with prudence, firmness, and policy; and he enlarged the limits of Sweden by the addition of some valuable provinces. But, Kettlemunsen dying, A. D. 1320.

Magnus

Magnus assumed the reins of government; and, actuated by caprice, followed the advice of his favourites, and despised and disregarded the prudent counsels of the wise and experienced. Entirely swayed by a crowd of inconsiderate young men, he began by announcing to Denmark haughty pretentions, which aimed at nothing less than the sovereignty of that kingdom.

But, finding himself frustrated in his expectations, he meditated an expedition against Russia, with which he waged an unsuccessful war; and to which, in order to appease the resentment of the Russians, he was obliged to cede part of Carelia. This unfortunate expedition involved Sweden in many difficulties. The king was obliged to increase the taxes and levy new imposts; and, having expended the revenues appropriated to the pope, he fell under the censure of his holiness, and was excommunicated. At the same time the people began to hate and despise their sovereign, on account of the mixture of weakness and tyranny which they perceived in his character. They saw him lavish the public money on his courtiers; and, among others, on a young nobleman whom he had created duke of Halland, and on whom the queen bestowed favours of a different nature, which equally disgraced herself and the king.

At length, the senate resolving to terminate the grievances of the people, advised Magnus to descend to a private station, which was most suitable for him, and to resign his crowns to his two sons; that of Sweden to Eric the elder, and that of Norway to Hacquin the younger. But, the king refusing to comply with the request of the senate, the nobility revolted, and placed the crown upon the head of Eric. A civil war now broke

broke out between the father and son, which was at length terminated by a treaty of partition, by which Magnus resigned a part of the dominions to Eric, and shared with him the title of king of Sweden. But the queen, dissatisfied with being deprived of half her former authority, administered a cup of poison to her son, who died soon after.

Magnus having now re-entered into the possession of undivided power, promised to correct the errors of his former conduct, and to govern the state with wisdom and probity. But, conscious of his want of ability, he placed himself under the protection of the king of Denmark, to whom he ceded some of the finest provinces of Sweden, on condition of being assisted by him in case of need. This cession excited the indignation of the states, who compelled him to seek refuge in Norway, which was governed by his son Hacquin. The Swedes, indignant at the conduct of Magnus, requested Hacquin to detain his father in Norway, and to break off all connexion with the king of Denmark. Hacquin promised to accede to these requests; but, instead of adhering to his engagement, married the king of Denmark's daughter, the celebrated Margaret. This breach of promise so incensed the Swedes that they deposed the father, and declared void all his son's claims to the crown of Sweden, which they conferred on Albert, duke of Mecklenburgh.

Albert accordingly assumed the reins of government; but, instead of employing himself in making his subjects happy, he endeavoured only to render himself absolute. Despising the Swedes, he copied the example of his predecessor, and adopted every measure that A. D. 1365.

could possibly irritate and incense them. He introduced Germans into the senate, in direct violation of the laws of the realm, and filled the kingdom with foreign mercenaries, whose insolence and avarice became insupportable to the people. At length, the country was so drained of money that Albert assembled the states, and informed them that it was necessary to annex to the crown the third part of the civil and ecclesiastical revenues of the whole kingdom. The nobility, unable to resist the demands of the king, who seized by force the property he desired, implored the assistance of Margaret; who, after the demise of her husband Hacquin, and her son Olaus, governed Norway, and, upon the death of her father, had ascended the throne of Denmark. She promised them the most effectual redress of grivances, provided they would secure to her the crown of Sweden, and make it permanent in her family: a condition which the Swedes chose to accept, rather than endure the tyranny of Albert.

In this manner Margaret was elected queen of Sweden; and, having defeated Albert in an engagement, made him prisoner, and confined him in the fortress of Calmar. A. D. 1387. But the princes of Mecklenburgh, the count of Holstein, and the Hanse Towns uniting in support of this unfortunate monarch, occasioned one of the most bloody wars recorded in history. Margaret was, however, finally victorious; and united the three kingdoms of Norway, Denmark, and Sweden, by the treaty of Calmar. But, although she had engaged to show no preference in her attention to any one above the rest, she could not avoid betraying a predilection for the

kingdom of Denmark, which was her paternal inheritance, and which she made her principal residence. This partiality appears in the last advice which she gave on her death-bed to Eric, her distant relative, whom she caused to be elected king. "Sweden," said she, "will furnish you with food; Norway with raiment; and with respect to Denmark, you must spare that kingdom, as the magazine of all your resources, in cases of necessity."

CHAP. II.

From the Accession of Eric XII. to that of Charles XI.

NO country has been rendered more unfortunate than Sweden, by the very measure devised for promoting its welfare. It was from the most remote period engaged in wars with Denmark: rivers of blood had flowed, and whenever hostilities had been suspended, that suspension was the effect, not of a substantial treaty of peace, but of a wretched truce made for the purpose of recovering strength, and of aiming at each other more deadly blows. Weary of these incessant vicissitudes, and desirous of putting an end to the calamities of war, the Swedes had acceded to the union of Calmar, which they considered as a measure dictated by wise policy, and calculated to insure to them and their posterity that peace and tranquillity, which their progenitors had never enjoyed. They moreover ex-

pected to find the blessings and advantages of a free government, under sovereigns who should act as their protectors, and on whom they had voluntarily bestowed the crown. But, even in the reign of Margaret, they experienced the restraints of tyranny and oppression. Eric XII. the successor of Margaret, imposed upon Sweden heavy taxes, which were levied by Danish governors, without feeling or compassion for the miseries of the people. The nobles were ruined by being compelled to serve at their own expence in the continental wars undertaken by the Danes, and to pay from their own purses the price of their ransom, whenever they fell into the hands of the enemy. The Danish governors promoted natives of Denmark to the Swedish prelacies, and divided the spoil with those intruded foreigners, who plundered and oppressed the clergy. But, of all the acts of violence and oppression committed on the Swedes during this reign, the most cruel and extraordinary were those exercised by a Danish governor, called Ericson, of Westerahs, who declared himself a sworn enemy to that inoffensive and laborious class of men, the peasants. These he caused to be massacred and subjected to cruel tortures for his mere amusement: some he smothered with smoke; others he flayed, salted, and broiled alive. Nor did he shew more compassion to the women, whom he ordered to be yoked, like oxen, to the plough, and driven with goads.

A. D. 1415.

These enormities of violent tyranny, though perhaps confined to a single district, excited a general insurrection throughout the kingdom. At the head of this revolt was Engelbert, who had boldly informed the king of the governor's conduct,

conduct, and had therefore been forbidden the court. The senate being convened, he entered the assembly at the head of a thousand peasants, pathetically represented the deplorable condition of Sweden, and the barbarity and insolence of the Danish governors, and proposed, that whoever opposed the measures in agitation for preserving the rights and liberties of the people, should be instantly put to death. His intrepidity and resolution obtained from the senate an act, by which they renounced their allegiance to Eric. Charles Canutson, grand-mareschal of Sweden, and governor of Finland, conformed immediately to the decree of the senate, and was made general and commander in chief of the army. The three kingdoms, unanimous in nothing else, resolved to depose a tyrant, whose cruelties rendered him unworthy of a crown.

But some differences arising between Canutson and his brother-in-law, Nicolas Stenon, Eric availed himself of these dissentions, and procured himself to be reinstated on the throne, under certain conditions which he subscribed as proposed by the senate. He now so firmly established his authority that he transmitted the Swedish diadem to Christopher, his successor in Denmark. Christopher obtained the triple crown upon the same terms as Margaret and Eric had subscribed, and consented to all the limitations specified in the treaty of Calmar. But he ruled Sweden with a sceptre of iron, and seemed desirous of alienating the affections of the Swedes, by preferring foreigners, and infringing every article of the agreement made at his accession. Had he lived longer, it is probable that his con-

duct would have affected another revolution; but death rid Sweden of a tyrant, and Christopher of the mortification of being degraded from that high station, to which the caprice of the people, and not his virtues, had raised him.

The senate were no sooner informed of the king's decease, than they appointed two brothers, Bengt and Nils Janson, regents of the kingdom, till the diet should form a determination respecting the choice of a new sovereign. Accordingly, the assembly being convened, proceeded to the nomination of a king. Charles Canutson did not forget his own interests in that emergency, but flattered the regents so successfully, that he was elected to the regal dignity by a great majority of votes. The Norwegians made overtures to him to accept their crown; and, having passed over into their country, he was chosen king of Norway without opposition. This two-fold instance of good fortune inspired him with a wish to obtain also the Danish diadem; but the war which he undertook against Denmark proved unsuccessful. He quarrelled soon after with his clergy.

A. D. 1448.

Charles having departed for Calmar, the archbishop of Upsal arrested all the officers of the king's household; and in a manifesto, publicly read and posted upon the gate of his cathedral, renounced his oath of allegiance, and accused the monarch of having oppressed the clergy and laity, of being a heritic, and of conferring all offices and employment on his infamous favourites. After this proclamation, the prelate entered the cathedral, and, exchanging his mitre and crosier for a sword and coat of mail, declared that he would not resume the ecclesiastical

astical habit, till the grievances of the people should be redressed, and the kingdom restored to happiness.

The king was no sooner informed of the revolt of the archbishop than he marched at the head of fourteen hundred horse, in order to surprize the prelate; who, being made acquainted with the designs of Charles, anticipated him, and attacking suddenly the royal army defeated them with great slaughter, and compelled the king to retire to Stockholm, from whence he sailed to Dantzick, and abdicated the crown. On his expulsion, Christian I. king of Denmark, was invited to the throne of Sweden, and crowned accordingly. A. D. 1458

Christian finding it necessary to impose some additional taxes on the Swedes, employed the archbishop to levy them. But, when the prelate demanded payment, the peasants began to mutiny, and resolutely answered, that they were under no obligations of paying any additional taxes, as the king had solemnly promised never to increase their present imposts, and they would hazard their lives in defence of their privileges. Christian being informed of these transactions, blamed the archbishop for exciting sedition among the peasants, and sent him prisoner to Copenhagen. This act of violence deprived the monarch of the support of the clergy; and Charles being recalled by the people, arrived in Sweden at the head of a numerous body of forces, and was put in possession of the city of Stockholm. He was acknowledged king of Sweden with loud acclamations and general testimonies of joy, and promised to govern in such a manner, as would give satisfac- A. D. 1464.

tion

tion to the people, and merit the return of their loyalty and affection.

In the mean time, Christian being compelled to take refuge in Denmark, paid court to the archbishop his prisoner, and sent him back to Sweden perfectly appeased, and flattered by the promise of placing in his hands the whole regal authority, if he could procure for him a restoration of the title. Fired with ambition, the archbishop exerted himself so effectually, that, after one of the most bloody actions recorded in history, he was victorious, and compelled Charles to retire as before, and by a formal declaration, to renounce all pretensions to the crown of Sweden. A. D. 1165.

The kingdom was now rent by civil war, which continued for so long a time, that the people, wearied and exhausted, demanded the restoration of Charles, whose brows were again encircled with the diadem. But he died soon after, decorated with that ornament so dear to the living, and which he had purchased by twenty-seven years of toils and difficulties. Christian, however, reaped no advantage from the death of Charles; for the Swedes, being weary of the Danish yoke, appointed from one of the principal families in the kingdom a regent, or protector, named Steen Sture. His administration, which continued upwards of twenty years, was very turbulent: the people were friendly, but the senate adverse to his government.

A. D. 1470.

A. D. 1497. At length the Swedes elected another monarch, John; to whom the regent was obliged to submit, and at the same time to abdicate his authority. Steen Sture assisted

assisted at the coronation of the new king: on which occasion he betrayed some symptoms of dissatisfaction; which indicated his design of exerting himself for the recovery of that rank and authority, which he had been compelled to relinquish. During the first years of John's reign, Sweden enjoyed perfect tranquillity, and the administration was conducted with great prudence and moderation. This monarch was in his disposition easy, forgiving, brave, and open; but, being misled by his favourites, he suffered himself to be guilty of those errors, which had proved fatal to his predecessors. Stern Sture artfully fomented the public discontent, and was again appointed regent. At his death, Suante Nelson Sture, who had performed very signal services to the state, and was descended of an ancient family that had formerly worn the crown, was elected protector of the kingdom. A. D. 1504.

Suante Nelson Sture dying in 1512, the states proceeded to the election of a new regent, and by a majority of votes, the son of Steen Sture was chosen to the office. He was a young man endowed with estimable qualities. But the death of John, king of Denmark, furnished his son Christian II. with an opportunity of renewing his pretensions to the crown of Sweden. Accordingly, having gained to his interest Gustavus Trolle, archbishop of Upsal, who had been Sture's competitor for the regency, and who now personally proclaimed the Dane, Christian marched an army into Sweden. Sture was not disconcerted by the superiority which the Danish monarch derived from the possession of a great A. D. 1513. A. D. 1520.

number

number of hostages, who were distinguished members of the nobility, and among whom was the young Gustavus Vasa, afterwards the deliverer of his country, who was transported with others to Denmark. The regent marched to give battle to Christian, fell in the thick of the conflict, was carried off by his friends, and died of his wounds. His death facilitated to the Danish monarch the means of executing the dreadful project which he had formed for the oppression of Sweden.

The cruel policy of tyrants seems to resemble the savage instinct of the beasts of prey, which teaches them to tear the guardians, that they may afterwards more easily devour the flock. Christian determined to destroy at once all the Swedish nobility; in order to revenge the troubles they had occasioned, and to prevent the people from revolting in future, by depriving them of proper persons to conduct their operations. He cut off the chief men of the nation with the axe of the executioner. The entire senate were conducted to death before the eyes of the citizens of Stockholm, who beheld the bloody scene with apathy and unconcern. The peasantry viewed this massacre in no other light than as a just retribution for the oppressive conduct of the nobles, who had converted the monarchy into a kind of aristocracy. The cruelty of Christian is almost inconceivable: he indiscriminately pillaged all ranks of people, erected every-where scaffolds and gibbets, and brandished the scythe of death over every head. He did not consider it as a sufficient gratification to deprive his victims of life; he took a pleasure in prolonging the duration of their sufferings

ferings by the sight of the preparations which preceeded the execution; and he wished to give them as it were a full relish of all the bitterness of death. Among other instances of cruelty and barbarity, he obliged women to sew with their own hands the sacks in which they were to be tied up and drowned.

Gustavus Vasa was one of the hostages, whom the king had sent into Denmark. Promises and threats were made use of to reconcile him to the despotic authority of Christian, but in vain; and the king, dreading his valour and constancy, gave orders to strangle him in prison. But Eric Banner, a Danish nobleman, who was charged with that detestable commission, instead of executing it, obtained its revocation; and held forth the hope that he should be able to inspire the youth with a favourable disposition to the government of Christian. He was, therefore, allowed to take him into custody, on condition of his keeping him a prisoner in the fortress of Calo in Jutland, and paying six thousand crowns, if he should make his escape.

The noble qualities of Gustavus gained the esteem of Banner and of the whole family, and he was not long at Calo before he received permission to walk about and hunt for his diversion. New recreations and amusements were every day proposed, and all the neighbouring country endeavoured to entertain the stranger. But nothing could make him forget that he was a prisoner; nor could all the civilities he received compensate the chagrin he experienced at being deprived of his liberty. Restraint, however, became more painful, and the desire of escape more powerful, from the moment he received information

information of the massacre at Stockholm, in which his father and most of his relatives had been involved.

Convinced that every expedient ought to be attempted for procuring his liberty, which might be the means of rescuing his country from destruction, Gustavus mounted his horse according to custom, under pretence of going to the chase, plunged deep into the forest, and, having arrived at a proper distance, assumed the garb of a peasant. Having quitted his horse, after a march of two days through almost impracticable paths, and over mountains, he arrived at Flensburgh, the last town on the Danish frontier, into which no person was admitted without a passport. Fortunately, however, at that season of the year, the merchants of Lower Saxony carried on a considerable trade in cattle, which they purchased in Jutland. Gustavus hired himself to one of those merchants, and, presenting himself to the governor as a dealer, was suffered to pass unmolested to Lubec.

Banner was no sooner informed of the escape of his prisoner, than following him with the greatest diligence, he overtook him at Lubec, and reproached him with a breach of confidence. Gustavus pleaded the existing circumstances as an apology, appeased his late host by promising to indemnify him in the loss of his ransom, and without delay, departed for Sweden, though he knew that orders had been every-where given in that kingdom to seize and arrest him. The first town where he made himself known was Calmar, which had belonged to the late regent, whose widow still lived in it with her children, and a German garrison. Those mercenary soldiers

diers only held the place for their own purposes, and were actually in treaty with the emissaries of Christian to deliver up the city. Gustavus assailed them with arguments, and told them that at the hazard of his life he had made his escape to Calmar, in order to have the glory of participating with them in the difficulties and dangers of resisting a tyrant, and of maintaining and defending the liberty of their country, which must be grateful to brave and generous minds. They asked him where were his resources, his army, his treasures; and, on his remaining silent, they called him a madman, and threatened to apprehend him.

Disappointed in the expectations he had formed of gaining those soldiers to his purpose, Gustavus retired from the city with great expedition; and his arrival being now publicly known, he was again obliged to have recourse to the garb of a peasant, in order to conceal himself from the Danish emissaries. He was, nevertheless, on the point of being seized, when he escaped in a waggon of hay, and sought shelter in a retired spot, where stood an ancient castle belonging to his family. From thence he wrote to his friends, informing them of his return, and requesting them to assemble a force for expelling the tyrant; but they refused to undertake so hazardous and desperate an attempt. They were no longer the bold and intrepid Swedes, jealous of their liberty, and the enemies of tyranny and oppression. The terror excited by the massacre at Stockholm had frozen up their courage.

Perceiving, therefore, that mean selfishness had supplanted public spirit among his friends,

Gustavus applied to the peasants; who, being a bold and independent race of men, had nothing to fear from the indignation of Christian, and who, he hoped, would embrace with ardour the opportunity of expelling the tyrant, and delivering their country. In vain did he mingle with them, range through their villages, assist at their assemblies and repasts, harangue them, and stimulate them to shake off the yoke. They answered, "Under the government of the king "of Denmark we have salt and herrings. "Whatever may be the success of a revolution, "we cannot be otherwise than poor. Peasants "we are; and peasants we must remain, who-"ever is king of Sweden."

Repulsed in that quarter, he determined to proceed to Dalecarlia, where, if he failed in the attempt of exciting the inhabitants to revolt, he could live securely in the high mountains and thick forests of that country. Attended, therefore, by a peasant, to whom he was known, he travelled in disguise; and, after a laborious and painful journey, arrived in the mountains of Dalecarlia, where he was deserted by his companion and guide, who robbed him of all the money he had provided for his subsistence. Destitute and in want, in a strange place, unknowing and unknown, he was urged by the call of hunger, and entered among the miners, with whom he wrought to earn a maintenance. Under the habit of a peasant, a woman in the mines perceived a fine embroidered shirt, which induced her to suspect that he was some man of distinguished rank, whom persecution had driven to seek an asylum in those caverns. The conjecture was reported to a neighbouring gentleman, who,

who, prompted by curiosity, repaired to the mine to offer protection to the unfortunate stranger. On approaching, he recognised Gustavus, with whom he had been acquainted at the university of Upsal. Prudence obliged him to conceal his astonishment; but at night he sent to him, made him an offer of his house, and gave him the strongest assurances of his friendship and protection.

Gustavus embraced with joy the offer of his generous friend, who informed him the Dalecarlians bore with impatience the Danish yoke; that they were attached to the family of their ancient sovereigns; and that great were the means of attack and defence, furnished by the nature of the country and the courage of the inhabitants. The frequent repetition of this conversation encouraged Gustavus to disclose his designs to his friend, who was no sooner informed of the intentions of the fugitive youth, than he endeavoured to dissuade him from his purpose, by representing to him, in the strongest light, the danger and difficulty of such an enterprize. Gustavus neither believed the hospitable Dalecarlian a friend to the Danes, nor did he think him capable of betraying him. But, not wishing to disturb the life of a quiet and peaceable man, he departed; and, trusting to his own good fortune, took his way, without a guide, through forests and over mountains, and arrived safe at the house of a nobleman named Peterson, with whom he had formerly been acquainted in the army.

Peterson received him with marks of respect and esteem, listened with every appearance of lively interest to the recital of his misfortunes,

seemed more affected by them than Gustavus himself, exclaimed against the tyranny of the Danes, and entered into his projects with apparent ardour and enthusiasm. This perfidious wretch named the nobles and peasants on whom he could depend, and, having become acquainted with the designs of Gustavus, privately went to a Danish officer, and, in the hope of a rich recompense, communicated to him the projects and retreat of his guest. The Dane hastened to Peterson's house, which he surrounded with soldiers; but Providence watched over the preservation of the fugitive patriot. Peterson's wife, moved with compassion, had opportunely apprised him of the perfidy of her husband, and committed him to the care of a faithful servant, who conducted him to the house of a neighbouring clergyman.

That ecclesiastic was a person who attentively studied mankind, reflected on public affairs, observed the course of events, aspired to no preferment, and was attached to no party. He received Gustavus with respect and tenderness, and assured him of his honour and secrecy. Far from being terrified by the project which the youthful hero entertained of opposing the power of Denmark, he traced out the path which was to lead him to ultimate success. "You must "not," said he, "endeavour to gain over to "your party the nobles, who are most of them "satisfied with the security and independence "which they enjoy in their mountains, and who "take little concern in the revolutions that "happen at court. It will be difficult to pre-"vail on them to arm their vassals, because "their wealth entirely depends on the number

"and

" and industry of that body of men, whose la-
" bours will be suspended by a war. But the
" most certain means of obtaining the end pro-
" posed will be to induce the vassals to take up
" arms of their own accord."

In order to prepare matters for that crisis, the clergyman undertook to propagate a report, that the Danes were preparing to enter the province to establish new taxes by force of arms. He employed his relatives and friends to disseminate the alarming intelligence; and, when he was convinced that the public mind was sufficiently impressed with the idea, he advised Gustavus to repair to Mora, where all the peasants of the surrounding district were wont to assemble annually at a public feast. " Never," said this sensible man, " are the vassals more bold, or
" more inclined to revolt, than at the times of
" those meetings, when they estimate their
" strength by their number." Agreeably to the advice of this honest and sage counsellor, the young hero departed for Mora; and on his arrival found the peasants prepared for his reception, and impatient to see a nobleman illustrious for his birth, his valour, and his sufferings. He appeared in the assembly with an air of intrepidity and resolution, tempered by a mixture of melancholy, which was naturally excited by the death of his father, and the other senators. The gazing multitude were instantly touched with compassion. But, when he spoke to them of the horrible massacre at Stockholm, of the tyranny of Christian, of the persecution of the provinces, and of the miseries of the kingdom in general, the assembly was inflamed with indignation, exclaimed against the Danes, and vowed

to revenge the death of their countrymen with the last drop of their blood. They immediately resolved to renounce their allegiance to Christian, and to sacrifice, without distinction, all the Danes in the province, as an atonement for the massacre of the Swedes. Gustavus took advantage of their kindled ardour, assembled around him the most determined of his hearers, attacked the castle in which resided the governor, who was unprepared for making resistance, took it by assault, and put to the sword the commandant and all his Danes.

In a few days, the whole province declared in favour of Gustavus; the peasants flocked in crowds to his standard; and, from that moment, the life of this young hero was an uninterrupted series of triumphs and success. At the head of the brave Dalecarlians, he undertook the most perilous enterprises of war; and his efforts were invariably crowned with victory. Being engaged in besieging Stockholm, which he closely pressed, and the Danes sailing to the relief of the garrison, a sudden frost bound their vessels in ice at a distance from the port. Gustavus formed the bold resolution of burning the hostile fleet, and marched at the head of his troops, who grasped their swords in one hand, and torches in the other. They endeavoured to scale the vessels; but the Danes commenced a terrible discharge of cannon and musquetry. In spite, however, of their brave resistance, several of the ships were set on fire, and abandoned with precipitation by each of the contending parties. The darkness of the night, the groans of the wounded, the shrieks of those who were perishing in the flames, and the crack-

cracklings of the ice, struck the Danes with terror and consternation. Many of their vessels were destroyed; and, in all probability, they would not have saved a single one, had not an intervening thaw prevented a second attack, which Gustavus intended to have made the following day.

This victory, which was gained in the sight of the capital, induced the most lukewarm of his countrymen to join him. A diet having assembled for the purpose of electing a sovereign, the speaker, in characterising a patriotic king, drew the portrait of Gustavus, whose vigilance, valour, activity, and prudence, would, he said, be able to oppose and resist all the future attempts of Denmark to subjugate and enslave the nation again, under pretence of renewing the union of Calmar. This harangue was received with universal applause; and the people, impelled by their zeal, anticipated the votes of the senators and deputies of the provinces, and proclaimed Gustavus king of Sweden. The air was rent with the acclamations of the multitude, and he was stiled the saviour and defender of his country. Gustavus modestly endeavoured to refuse the crown, but suffered himself to be prevailed on by the prayers and intreaties of the whole assembly, and was accordingly acknowledged king of Sweden and of the two Gothlands, by the united voices of the senate, deputies, and people, who took an oath of fidelity to the new monarch. A. D. 1523.

Soon after the accession of Gustavus to the Swedish throne, the reformed doctrines of religion were introduced into Sweden by certain Germans, who imported the writings of Luther.

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The king, who had been sometimes opposed by the established clergy, considered the present as a favourable opportunity for introducing Lutheranism into his dominions; and he, therefore, ordered that a literal translation of the sacred writings should be made, and permitted the reformers to preach against the doctrine of indulgences, and to display the pernicious consequences of the celibacy of the clergy. In order to divert Gustavus from engaging in religious matters, the catholics prevailed on a peasant, named Hans, to personate Nils Sture, the son of the late administrator. Accordingly, the impostor having repaired to Dalecarlia, a province in which the name of Sture was held in esteem and veneration, formed a considerable party in his favour, and expected to succeed to the crown of Sweden. Gustavus, however, was no ways intimidated by his proceedings; but, having convoked an assembly of the states, he declared himself a disciple of that doctrine which had been taught by Christ and his apostles, and which certain violent ecclesiastics branded with the odious appellations of innovation and heresy. The mild and insinuating manner in which he treated the turbulent and credulous Dalecarlians, and the tender regard he expressed for the happiness and welfare of his people, removed all the suspicions raised by the clergy, and checked the growing influence of the pretended Sture. In short, the states at length consented to the proposals of the monarch: Lutheranism was established, and became the religion of Sweden; and the lands of the clergy were sequestered.

A. D. 1527.

In

In the mean time, Christian made preparations for recovering the throne of which he had been deprived. He had formed a powerful interest in Norway, and sailed with a fleet of thirty ships, on board of which were ten thousand troops, with the intention of invading Sweden. This armament, however, was overtaken by a storm; and the Swedes, having attacked Christian's army near Bahus, defeated it, and obtained a glorious victory. Hitherto the kings of Sweden and Denmark had preserved the externals of friendship; but Denmark could never forget its former superiority, nor lay aside the thoughts of re-annexing Sweden to that crown. The character of Gustavus, however, intimidated the Danish monarchs from attempting it openly; and they, therefore, contented themselves with intrigues and cabals, which tended to disturb his peace, and alienate the minds of his subjects. A. D. 1531.

Gustavus, having assembled the states, prevailed on them to render the crown hereditary in his family. His eldest son Eric, who was then eleven years of age, was elected successor to the throne, with this extraordinary privilege, that his descendants in the male line should successively inherit the crown; but, when the male race became extinct, the choice of a king was to devolve on the senate and the states. In this assembly, the people took an oath to maintain the protestant religion, according to the tenets of the reformed church; and from this period we may date the entire extinction of catholicism in Sweden. A. D. 1544.

Gustavus applied himself to the arts of peace, and encouraged science and commerce. The cities

cities were decorated with beautiful edifices, men of genius patronised, and, in short, the king adopted every measure that could render the people happy, or himself powerful. He settled the affairs of his own family, and assigned portions to his younger children: on John, the second son, he bestowed Finland; on Magnus, the third, the province of West Gothland; and on Charles, the fourth, Nericia, Sundermannia, and Wermeland. The king was attacked by a slow fever, which terminated his existence in the seventy-first year of his age. His body was interred at Upsal, amidst the tears and lamentations of his subjects.

Thus died the great Gustavus Vasa; who, by his persevering virtue and patriotism, rescued the Swedes from tyranny and oppression. His character was very extraordinary, if we consider the times in which he lived. He had a taste for the sciences, a well-informed mind, and united in himself the valour of a soldier, the ability of a general, and the talents of a statesman. His person was graceful and engaging, his air noble and majestic. His eloquence was nervous, and proved equally useful in the season of prosperity and of adversity. He encouraged commerce and the arts, raised the power and reputation of his crown, rendered his people happy, and acquired the esteem of all Europe.

A. D. 1560. Eric XIV. eldest son of the late monarch, ascended the throne of Sweden at the age of twenty-seven. His accomplishments were rather shining than solid. He spoke the modern languages, danced gracefully, showed animation in all his actions, and was eloquent and polite. But he suffered himself to be

be hurried away with gusts of passion, which sometimes obliterated every trace of reason, and rendered him furious. Gustavus, who had witnessed these fits of rage, had once formed the design of excluding him from the throne, and of conferring the crown on his second son; and he was only deterred from his purpose by the fear of a civil war. Had the late king, however, adopted that measure, it would have prevented many misfortunes. From surveying the actions of Eric, we are led to conclude that, what the indulgence of his father considered as only a derangement of intellect, was an habitual madness, accompanied by presumption, cruelty, perfidy, and degrading amours. There was scarcely any species of folly or wickedness of which he was not guilty; but, as he testified extreme sorrow for his behaviour, it would be unjust not to pardon him his great excesses, and uncandid not to suppose that he was instigated to them by the pernicious counsels of his infamous favourites. His misconduct, however, cost him dear.

Gustavus had sought the hand of Elizabeth, queen of England, for his son Eric, who, impatient of her delay to answer his proposals, and thinking that his presence might hasten her determination, resolved soon after his accession to the throne to make a visit to that princess. Accordingly, having equipped a fleet which displayed both strength and gallantry, and which he loaded with presents, he set sail for England; but the vessels being overtaken by a furious storm, were driven back upon his own coast, where he suffered shipwreck. Whether this accident cooled his A. D. 1561.

passion

passion for Elizabeth, or the inconstancy of his disposition caused him to abandon all thoughts of that princess for the present, certain it is that he began to entertain an affection for Mary, queen of Scots, the most beauteous and accomplished woman of her age, whom he demanded in marriage. No sooner, however, had the ambassadors entered upon their mission than he sent other ministers to the emperor, to solicit the hand of the princess of Lorraine, daughter of Christian II. with whom he fell in love from the description of some of his courtiers. These last returned with a favourable answer; but Eric had changed his mind previously to their arrival: his passion for the princess of Lorraine, and the queen of Scots, had vanished; and his affection for Elizabeth, queen of England, returned. He also dispatched ambassadors to demand in marriage the daughter of the landgrave of Hesse Cassel, and sent a dozen ships of war to meet her, without being certain of her consent. He finally, however, concluded these missions by marrying a simple peasant-girl, named Catharine, whose beauty had struck him while she was yet a child, and on whom he had bestowed a superior education, without any intention of making her a partner in his throne, though she raised herself to it by her address. Duke John, brother to the king, displayed more steadiness of conduct, and more prudence and policy, than Eric: he sought and obtained in marriage the princess Catharine, daughter of Sigismund, king of Poland, whose power and protection might prove to him a useful resource in the difficult circumstances which he anticipated from the irregularities of his brother.

This

This marriage widened the breach between the king and the duke, who had already differed in other matters. The quarrel rose to such a height that John was cited to Stockholm, to vindicate his conduct, particularly with respect to his allying himself to Poland, and disposing of certain castles in Livonia to that crown. The duke refusing to obey the citation, an army was sent into Finland with orders to seize John and his wife, and to bring them to Stockholm. They were accordingly conducted to the capital, where the duke was condemned to perpetual imprisonment; and the duchess voluntarily shared the captivity of her husband, and the anxieties which he suffered during four years of confinement. Previously to his being immured in prison, the states, that were unable to resist the commands of their tyrant, had condemned him to death; and Eric, who pretended to understand astronomy, foretold that the pardon which he had granted his brother, would at some period become fatal to himself. It is said that the king went frequently to the prison with the design of murdering his brother; but that, on seeing him, he felt his heart moved with pity. Often with tears in his eyes did he confess to John the sanguinary design which had prompted his visit, and added, "I "know that the crown of Sweden is intend-"ed for you; and I request that, when you "are become possessed of it, you will pardon "my errors." Hence we may discover the weakness of his disposition, the certainty of his being insane, and his constant apprehensions that his brothers would rebel and dispossess him. A. D. 1563.

Having disobliged the nobility, who were connected by alliance with the duke, they refused to communicate their advice to the king, which obliged him to have recourse to the sycophants and parasites of his court.

Of the many extraordinary prejudices entertained by Eric, the most unfortunate was his hatred to the Stures, who were an illustrious family descended from the ancient regents. Eric had lately taken one of them into favour, and sent him in quality of embassador to Stralsund; but he became once more the object of the king's abhorrence, who conceived that he was conspiring against his life and crown, in order to share the latter with queen Catharine. The Swedish monarch laboured to convince the states that Sture carried on dangerous intrigues at Stralsund; that he was ambitious of recovering the dignity possessed by his ancestors, and earnest to revenge the late affront which had been offered to his pride. An infamous favourite, named Peerson, persuaded Eric to extirpate the whole family. Accordingly, he demanded of the senate (whom we see on every occasion acting as the vile flatterers of the tyrant's passion) a sentence of death against those unfortunate men, together with twenty-six nobles, who were the pretended accomplices of a conspiracy laid to their charge. But at the trial of Nils Sture, whom the king had suspected as head of the faction, every thing appeared so much in his favour that Eric complimented him on the occasion, and hoped he would endeavour to forget the suspicions which had been harboured against his loyalty. The king, however, visiting him a few days after in prison, stabbed

the unfortunate wretch with a poniard, and left the weopon sticking in the wound. Nils Sture drew the dagger from his side, and presented it to the monarch. This affecting behaviour did not prevent his being put to death by the guards, who were ordered to dispatch him with their halberds. The rest of the prisoners were also cruelly massacred at the same time.

No sooner was this judicial murder committed, than Eric felt the pangs of a wounded conscience. He grew frantic, and, as if pursued by the avenging furies, fled into the woods, where, clad in the habit of a peasant, he led during several months the life of a savage. At length his retreat was discovered, and he was induced to return by the influence of his wife Catharine, who prevailed on him to take some food and repose. He then assumed a quite different character; he always appeared magnificently dressed; he distributed large sums of money among the friends and relations of those who had been put to death; and imputed the whole blame of the crime to Peerson, who had seduced him to commit that bloody action. Peerson, therefore, was tried and condemned to suffer capital punishment. The king also, in order to obliterate the impressions made by his past conduct, complied with the wishes of the Swedish nation, and restored to liberty his brother John and his wife. A. D. 1567.

Eric had often solicited the czar of Russia to form with him an alliance against Sigismund, king of Poland, whose daughter duke John had married. The Russian had before paid his addresses to this princess, but met with a repulse. He, therefore, demanded as a preliminary ar-

ticle of the treaty, that the duchess should be delivered into his hands. To this Eric acceded, and the czar having sent embassadors for that purpose, the king began to meditate how he should fulfil his engagement. The intrigues of of the monarch, however, were discovered by the dukes John and Charles, who immediately deliberated with the friends of the lords that had been massacred at Upsal, in what manner they should avert the design of the king. At length it was unanimously resolved to dethrone Eric, and to prevent the Danes from traversing their intentions, an embassador was sent to Copenhagen.

In the mean time the Swedish monarch was busily employed in devising means for the execution of his project, when the dukes John and Charles, who had raised a considerable force, and obtained a sufficient quantity of treasure for the prosecution of the war, raised the standard of revolt. So rapid was the progress of the insurgents, that they were soon in full march at the head of a powerful army, and appeared before Stockholm. They were joined by numbers of the soldiers and inhabitants of that city, and the king, finding that force would avail him nothing, had recourse to other expedients, which were equally ineffectual.

A. D. 1568.

Trenches were opened, and batteries began to play against the city; but Eric opposed all the attempts of the enemy with great bravery and skill. At length, however, destitute of succours and advice, he began to despair of his affairs, and was obliged to yield to the inclinations of the people, who insisted that the gates

gates should be opened to the dukes. The troops having entered Stockholm during the night, the king fled to the citadel, where he was forced to capitulate. He consented to surrender his crown, and stipulated for no other terms than that he might be confined in a prison suitable to his dignity. He was, therefore, delivered into the custody of the relatives of the Stures, who seemed to be most interested in safely guarding him. The senate, no less unfaithful to Eric in his adversity than they had been basely subservient to him in his prosperity, renounced their allegiance; and the assembled states, imitating their example, duke John was solemnly elected king of Sweden. Thus terminated the reign of a prince, whose inconstancy of disposition subjected him to misfortunes; and who, nevertheless, was endowed with talents which might have rendered himself and his people powerful and happy. He possessed great personal bravery; and his reign was not inglorious: under his conduct, the Swedish troops repeatedly distinguished themselves in combating the Danes; and it seems highly probable that he would not have submitted to the hard conditions, which the latter imposed on his successor.

John had no sooner ascended the throne of Sweden than he found himself at war with the Danes, who were the natural enemies of the Swedish monarchs, and with the Russians, whose czar had been irritated with the failure of his plot. The king, being hard pressed by the enemy, resolved to impede the farther progress of misfortunes by concluding a peace with the Danes, to whom he ceded his right to Norway, Halland, Bleking, A. D. 1568.

Jemptland, and Hermdaln. John made all preparations to resist the fury of the czar, who was forming a numerous army for the invasion of Livonia and Finland: he sent Mornay to solicit assistance from Elizabeth, queen of England, and from the king of Scotland; but this embassy had nearly proved fatal to his interest. Mornay was secretly a partizan of the deposed Eric, whose restoration he ardently desired; and the queen of England entertained the same sentiments. Intrigues were carried on between them; and Puffendorf affirms, that Elizabeth endeavoured to excite the embassador to assassinate John. The king's embassy to England and Scotland producing no effect, he resolved to depend on his own subjects, of whom he sent strong detachments into Livonia. The czar, however, entering that province at the head of a numerous army, defeated the Swedes, and desolated the whole country.

A. D. 1570.

Matters were in this situation, when the king, at the instigation of the queen, meditated the restoration of popery. He intended, however, to purge the Romish church of certain superstitious ceremonies; but he believed that it was the true primitive faith, and hoped to reduce the religion of Sweden to the simplicity of the earlier ages of the gospel. His majesty's address, the ambition of the clergy, the influence of the queen, and many other circumstances, contributed to gain the ready assent to what he proposed. Several of the ancient customs and ceremonies of the church were restored, and the king, in order to reward the zeal and obedience of

of the ecclesiastics, suffered them to proceed to the election of prelates to fill the vacant sees.

After this transaction, several meetings of the bishops, and general convocations of the clergy, were convened by the king, and certain disputed doctrines taken into consideration. During the space of three years, the kingdom was rent by theological dissentions, and reason seemed to be wholly extinguished by the violence of bigotry and enthusiasm. Duke Charles and his dependents opposed the measures of John; and the heat of parties would probably have occasioned a civil war, had not the queen prudently interposed, and consented rather to permit liberty of conscience than to involve the nation in scenes of blood and confusion. Charles also influenced the states, who remonstrated with the king on his intention of restoring popery, and intreated that he would place the heir-apparent to the crown under protestant tutors, as the only means of preserving the affection, and quieting the apprehensions of the people. After the death of the queen, they renewed their remonstrances, and exhorted prince Sigismund to declare openly in favour of the doctrines of the reformation, and to abjure popery: but his constant answer was, that he preferred a heavenly to an earthly crown. The king, however, perceiving the influence of his brother duke Charles, and apprehending the consequences of the negociations that prince was then carrying on for the support of protestantism, in which England, the German princes, and all the reformed states, had combined, determined to terminate the disputes about religion, and thereby secure the esteem and affections of the people.

During

During these occurences, Eric, though a prisoner, had become a subject of disquietude to his brother; who obliged him to appear in the high court of justice, there to undergo the disgrace of a public accusation and deposition. He displayed greater firmness on that occasion than had been expected; and excited the pity and compassion of a great part of his audience. The unfortunate Eric was recommitted to prison, and left in the hands of the Sture family, who treated him with great severity, and carried their brutality to such an excess, as to strike him, and to make him suffer hunger and cold. At length, as his detention became a source of embarrassment during the late efforts of the king to alter the religion of the kingdom and to restore popery, John caused the wretched captive to be taken off by a dose of poison. This criminal act marks a gloomy character, a fanatic persuasion that the interest of religion will sanction the most atrocious deeds; and John was a warm devotionist. It will also appear, that Charles entertained similar sentiments respecting the sanguinary liberties authorised by political considerations, and, in fact, none of the sons of the great Gustavus Vasa inherited the frank and generous virtues of their sire.

A. D. 1578.

Sigismund, the son of John, had become king of Poland, after a contested election, which had been decided by the forces of Sweden. Advice of this transaction no sooner arrived in Sweden, than information of it was sent to duke Charles, who, together with the states, was required to take a fresh oath of fidelity. Charles declared that he was ready to pay every respect due to the prince; but that he would never consent

that

that Esthonia and the Swedish possessions in Livonia should fall into the hands of foreigners. This declaration of the duke obliged the king and prince Sigismund to protest to the Polish embassadors, that they would never consent to alienate any part of the Swedish dominions, or to accept of the crown of Poland on such terms as should be prejudicial to Sweden. Some discussions took place in the Senate, relative to the latitude which should be allowed to the prince in the external practice of the Romish religion; and Charles was discovered to have had an agency in the disputes on that subject, and that his interference was not of a conciliatory tendency. At length it was agreed to defer the decision of this matter to the time when Sigismund should succeed to the crown of Sweden.

The death of John was sudden: he was seized with a disorder in his bowels, and fell a victim to the ignorance of his physicians. He died more esteemed than beloved by his subjects. The obstinacy of his temper induced him to persevere in measures which he knew to be wrong; and he never yielded except to his wife, who inflamed him with very warm zeal for an expiring religion. Had he lived, his superstitious and imprudent adherence to the scheme of religious reformation would probably have involved him in disputes with his subjects, which might have terminated fatally to both.

On the death of John, Charles took upon himself the regency of the kingdom till the arrival of Sigismund, who was then in Poland, and whom he informed of the demise of his father. Having performed the funeral obsequies of the late king, the senate promised A. D. 1592.

promised obedience, and to assist him in the protection of the established reformed religion, and in the preservation of the rights and privileges of the nation. The states were then convoked to deliberate on the means of preventing the introduction of a new liturgy, and the re-establishment of the popish religion. This measure was deemed absolutely necessary previous to the arrival of Sigismund, who had embraced the tenets of the church of Rome. Among the first acts of his reign, he betrayed his predilection for the Popish religion, by insisting that one church for papists should be permitted in every city or town, and by refusing to be crowned by a protestant bishop.

A. D. 1593.

Great dissensions arose in the kingdom: the states urged their pretensions with great warmth; and the nobility presented to the monarch strong remonstrances, which regarded their peculiar privileges. Sigismund demanded that both should implicitly rely on his promise, and that the Romish as well as the Lutheran religion, should be preached to the people. Charles, however, charged himself with the important office of prevailing on the king to give satisfaction to the states; and, therefore repaired to the palace, where a violent altercation took place between him and Sigismund. The latter, however, afterwards pretended to be perfectly reconciled with the duke; but while matters seemed thus happily compromised, the king formed the base design of murdering Charles, who being informed of the intention of the monarch, made his escape. Sigismund, however, being in haste to return to Poland, agreed to every

every thing required of him by the states, and left the administration of affairs in the hands of Charles.

After the king had set sail for Dantzick, the duke convoked the states, from whom he procured decisions little conformable to the views of his nephew. But as he could not prevail on that assembly to adopt all his ideas, he felt his pride hurt, and declared that as his toil and labour for the service of the state were repaid with ingratitude, he would lay down his commission. No sooner was Sigismund informed of the quarrel between the duke and the states, and of the resolution of Charles, than he conferred the whole power on the senate, excluded the duke from any share in the government, and enjoined all his subjects to oppose any attempts which might be made by the duke to subvert the authority of the senate. From that period, the uncle and nephew came to an open rupture, and Sigismund, resolving to compel the duke to submit, levied a powerful army, which he reinforced with the troops in Finland. The menaces and manifestoes of the king struck with terror the soldiers of Charles, of whom many threw down their arms, and deserted to their sovereign. Hostilities immediately commenced, and the troops of the duke being defeated in an engagement, he had recourse to negociation. A. D. 1595. A. D. 1598.

Sigismund having restored peace to the kingdom, returned to Poland. During his absence, Charles contrived by his intrigues to have a new meeting of the states convoked, in which he assumed a marked ascendency. The public conduct of Charles at A. D. 1600.

this

this period was open, candid, and moderate; while at the same time he secretly fomented quarrels between the king and the states, and adopted every measure that could forward his ambition. At length matters were brought to such a crisis, that the elevation of Charles to the Swedish throne seemed a matter of necessity, produced by the mal-administration of Sigismund, who also refused to submit to the proposed restrictions on the exercise of his religion. Sigismund was therefore solemnly deposed, and, together with his son Uladislaus, declared for ever incapable of wearing the Swedish diadem, which was bestowed on Charles.

A. D. 1604.

CHAP. III.

From the Accession of Charles IX. to the Death of Charles XII.

THE diet, which conferred the crown on Charles IX. decreed, that in case of the failure of male issue, it should revert to the posterity of John, and next to the heirs of the daughters of the great Gustavus Vasa, who were married in Germany. They also ordained that no future king of Sweden should take a wife, except from a protestant family; and that, should the hereditary prince accept of a foreign crown, he should thenceforward be considered as incapable of succeeding to the throne of Sweden. Besides these regulations, they also passed all the rigorous laws generally resorted to in revolutions; an engagement by oath to support

support the new order of things, and a proscription of all who should oppose it. Popery became an object of suspicion: its professors were laid under severe restraints; and the Lutherans obtained a complete triumph.

Charles was no sooner seated on the throne, than he resolved to oppose the encroachments of the Poles in Livonia. His absence, however, furnished Sigismund with an opportunity of making an attempt on Finland. Charles was afterwards on the point of attacking Riga, when his army suffered a severe defeat by the Poles, who had nearly taken him prisoner. The decisiveness of this victory, however, could not enable Sigismund to pursue his success, on account of the disturbances in Poland, which fully occupied his attention.

Though Charles was possessed of abilities in the cabinet, and endued with personal valour, he was nevertheless unfortunate in the field. Being also enfeebled by an attack of apoplexy, he entrusted at an early period the management of his military concerns to his son Gustavus Adolphus, and contented himself with setting him the example of a domestic administration, as just as can possibly be under a king, who thinks it his duty to offer violence to the conscience of his subjects. Charles has been praised for punctual fidelity in the observance of his promises; but his conduct towards his brother John, and his nephew Sigismund, deserves no commendation. He was sincere in his friendship, liberal in rewarding merit, severe in the punishment of crimes, and a generous promoter of the arts, sciences, commerce, and agriculture. He was addicted to

A. D. 1611. violent transports of passion, which, however, were of short duration. He died in the sixty-first year of his age.

On the death of Charles, his son, Gustavus Adolphus, who was then only eighteen years of age, and whose brows had been encircled with the laurels of victory before his twelfth year, was deemed by the states sufficiently qualified to sustain the weight of government, and was, therefore, allowed to take into his own hands the reins of administration. Among the number of valuable counsellors, whom Gustavus had in his service, was a brother of Sigismund, the king's cousin-german. This man had some claims to the throne, but sacrificed them to the pleasing hopes with which the great qualities of Gustavus inspired the whole Swedish nation.

A. D. 1612. The king assembled the states; and what impressed the Swedes with the highest ideas of his penetration and capacity was, the choice he made of a minister. The chancellor Oxenstiern was placed at the head of foreign and domestic affairs. This man to the manners of a stoic, added superior abilities in matters of state, remarkable rectitude and probity, keen philosophic penetration, with a taste for, and a practical knowledge of the sciences. Gustavus also filled every other department with enlightened and prudent persons, and benefited his kingdom by the happy changes which he effected in the administration of justice and finance.

The king took on himself the charge of martial operations, and prosecuted the war against

A. D. 1613. Denmark with such vigour and success, that, through the mediation of Great Britain and Holland, an advantageous peace

peace was procured, by which the Danish monarch renounced all pretensions to the throne of Sweden. He was equally fortunate with the Russians, who ceded Livonia, and part of the province of Novogorod, to Gustavus. His hostilities, however, with his cousin Sigismund, were of longer duration, and were productive of events, which procured Gustavus a conspicuous rank among the most distinguished warriors.

The king of Poland could not forget the Swedish crown, which nature had planted on his head, but of which he was deprived by the impolitic conduct and errors of his father and himself. He formed a scheme for seizing on the person of Gustavus, who, however, judiciously eluded the snare. The Swedish monarch having prepared a numerous fleet, on board of which he embarked twenty thousand men, set sail for Riga, to which he laid siege. This place, which was strongly fortified, was also garrisoned with a considerable body of veteran troops, whose attachment to Sigismund was almost incredible. It was, however, at length obliged to yield to the valour and resolution of the Swedish monarch, who, in consideration of the brave defence of the besieged, allowed them to capitulate on honourable terms. A. D. 1621.

After the reduction of Riga, the kings of Poland and Sweden concluded a truce, which, however, was of short duration. Gustavus, during a series of years, was engaged in constant warfare, which afforded him opportunities of martialising the Swedes, and of forming those intrepid commanders and those formidable

battalions, which during a long time kept Europe in suspense, and balanced the fate of sovereigns. At length, the Swedish monarch gloriously terminated the war with Poland, and obtained possession of a vast extent of territory.

A. D. 1629.

But Gustavus did not long enjoy the fruits of his victories in peace: the resentment which he bore to the emperor, for the assistance which he had given to king Sigismund, his desire to curb the ambition of the house of Austria, and to succour the protestant states of the empire, determined him to march an army into Germany. He convoked an assembly of the states, who wished to divert him from his purpose by magnifying the dangers and obstacles with which he would have to contend. "The papists," replied the monarch, "whom I am preparing "to attack, are rich and effeminate: my sol- "diers are endued with courage; and my ge- "nerals possess abilities. But, if it be the will "of Heaven that I must fall in the defence of "liberty, of my country, and of mankind, I "am firmly persuaded that Divine Providence "will support my subjects, who will not fail to "discharge their duty to my child."

The army of Gustavus consisted of sixty thousand men, who were the best soldiers in the universe, and warm with sentiments of esteem for their chief. His generals, who were men of approved talents, were chiefly British, and had been attracted by his generosity to his standard. On the other hand, he was opposed by those illustrious commanders, Walstein, Mansveldt, and Tilly; whose names are celebrated in the annals of war.

Having

Having collected his forces, and declared his reasons for invading the empire, the king, with the impetuosity of a thunderbolt, burst into Germany, and anticipated the designs of the imperialists. He reduced Frankfort on the Oder, and various other places; and obliged the elector of Brandenburgh to unite his troops with the Swedish battalions. He then invaded Saxony, whose elector wished to remain neuter. The imperialists awaited Gustavus on the plains of Leipsic, and formed an army of forty-four thousand veteran troops. The Swedish monarch, distinguished by a green feather in his hat, led his soldiers to the attack, and, after a severe conflict, obtained a complete victory. Gustavus then penetrated into Bavaria, levied contributions on the opulent districts of Germany, and placed his troops in good quarters. A. D. 1630. A. D. 1631.

The events of war conducted back the king, who was still victorious, to the field of Lutzen, near Leipsic. On this engagement seemed to depend the fate of Europe, which was defended, as before, by select troops and chosen generals. The Swedish infantry behaved with astonishing valour, broke the line of the imperialists, and seized their cannon. Victory had already declared for the Swedes, when Gustavus was found stretched among the slain. This disastrous event, which was highly advantageous to the house of Austria, was said, but without proof, to have been occasioned by an assassin, whom the emperor employed for that purpose. The emperor, however, was by this time completely cured of the presumption which prompted him to say, when Gustavus A. D. 1633.

marched forth from the icy tracts of Sweden, " He is a king of snow, who will melt away in " the warmer regions."

The death of the brave Gustavus plunged Sweden into the greatest affliction. In an instant, she beheld herself ready to be hurled from the summit of power and glory, and to become the prey of her neighbours The triumphant bands of the late monarch, however, supported their reputation under the conduct of Horn, Banier, Weimar and Torstenson, who were generals every way worthy of the command of the armies of the defunct hero. In a war that continued several years, and in which those battalions were invited by several princes, who were sure of fixing victory on their side when they could unite under their own banners the Swedish standards, many of those formidable corps insensibly wasted away, being worn out by their own exploits. A few of them, who returned to their native country, carried back that military spirit and that ardent love of glory, which Gustavus had excited, and which they transmitted to their posterity.

The thirty years' war, that desolated Germany, was favourable to the tranquillity of Sweden; which enjoyed internal repose during the minority of Christina, who was not more than five years of age when she succeeded her father, Gustavus. The abilities of Oxenstiern, who pursued her father's plan, preserved for her that preponderancy which the cabinet of Sweden possessed in the affairs of Germany. At an early age, Christina discovered a distaste for the society and occupations of her sex; and delighted only in violent exercises, and in exertions of strength

strength and feats of activity. She also possessed a taste for abstract studies, for the severer sciences, the acquisition of languages, and the study of legislation and of history. Her favourite authors were Tacitus, Thucydides, and Polybius.

Christina, having completed the eighteenth year of her age, assumed the reins of government, and proved herself fully able to conduct the affairs of a powerful kingdom. The princes of Europe aspired to her hand; but their proposals were uniformly rejected by the queen. Political interests, contrariety of religion, and diversity of manners, were pleaded by Christina as the motives of her conduct; of which the true cause, perhaps, was her love of independence and impatience of controul. "Do "not," said she to the states, "compel me to "make a choice: should I bear a son, it is "equally probable that he might prove a Nero "as an Augustus." But, though determined not to share her authority with a partner, she conceived it to be her duty not to entail on Sweden the prospect of wars and disturbances after her decease. Having, therefore, obtained the consent of the states, she nominated a successor to the crown; and her choice fell on her cousin, Charles Gustavus, count palatine. A. D. 1644. A. D. 1650.

That prince observed towards the queen a conduct calculated to banish all uneasiness from even the most jealous mind. He manifested no inclination to reign, and seemed assiduous only in paying perfect obedience to the wishes of Christina. He avoided meddling in affairs of state, except when invited and almost forced so to do

do. The rank, however, which it by its splendour and power, had at first flattered her imagination, the queen at length began to feel as a burthen; she sighed for freedom and leisure, and, after mature deliberation, determined to abdicate the throne. This resolution she communicated to the states, who dissuaded her from her purpose; and in which remonstrance the people unanimously, and even Charles Gustavus, warmly joined. Yielding to their importunities, she sustained the weight of the crown two years longer, when she resumed her design of abdication, which she carried into effect in the twenty-eighth year of her age. In the tears of the people she read at once their attachment: while every heart was moved, she alone remained firm and tranquil.

A. D. 1652.

Having thus discharged her public duty, and transferred to Charles Gustavus the future welfare of the kingdom, she hastened in pursuit of science to a country more favourable to its cultivation. In quitting the scene of her regal power, she appeared as if escaped from imprisonment; and having arrived at a small brook that separates Sweden from Denmark, she alighted from her carriage, and leaped over the stream: "At length," said she, "I am free, "and out of Sweden, whither I hope never to "return." She repaired to Rome, where she became a catholic; on account of which change her character has been attacked by protestant writers.

Unfortunately, however, Christina furnished matter for slander or calumny. Having conceived an inclination to see France, she repaired thither. The French, who are quick to discover

ver ridiculous follies, saw nothing in Christina but a too great freedom of manner, a masculine style of conversation, an affected neglect of her person at the expence of decent cleanliness, and a rough and savage genius void of all delicacy. Christina, on the other hand, taxed them with ignorance, frivolity, and an inordinate passion for dress and pleasure. She also gave disgust to the court by violating its forms, by persevering in wearing the dress of men, and by the contempt with which she treated her own sex.

A still more serious accusation is brought against her, respecting the murder of Monadelschi, her master of horse, and which it is impossible to vindicate. For some reason, which has never come to the knowledge of the world, she caused him to be called into a gallery of the castle of Fontainbleau, where she resided, and presented letters to him; at the sight of which he turned pale, and entreated for mercy. He was told that he must die; and was accordingly put to death by the command of Christina, who remained in an adjoining apartment till the bloody deed was executed. His crime is thought to have been the revelation of a secret. The court ordered her to quit France; and she, therefore, returned to Rome, where she died, little esteemed, in 1689.

On the same day that Christina resigned the sovereignty, the hereditary prince, Charles Gustavus, was solemnly crowned at Upsal. A. D. 1654. In consequence of a difference between him and Casimir, the son of that Sigismund who had been deposed from the throne of Sweden, Charles attacked and defeated the Poles in several successive engagements; and, at length, thought

thought himself on the point of obtaining possession of the crown of Poland. The emperor, however, dreading the vicinity of the Swedish monarch, stirred up against him entire Ger-
A. D. 1658. many. Charles successfully withstood the combined efforts of his enemies, though he had to contend with the troops of Austria, Brandenburg, Poland, Russia, and Denmark.

Charles Gustavus died of an epidemic disease. He was a brave, bold, intrepid monarch, whose ambition excited the greatest powers of Europe against him, and whose genius, fruitful in resources, would probably have triumphed over all difficulties, and compelled his enemies to conclude a peace on honourable terms, if he had lived only a few years longer.

A. D. 1660. The minority of his son Charles XI. who succeeded to the throne, rendered it necessary to suspend all military projects, and to afford to Sweden a temporary repose. This tranquillity, however, was only of short duration. No sooner had Charles attained the
A. D. 1674. age to imitate the example of his father, than he invaded Brandenburg, and recommenced with Denmark a war which
A. D. 1679. proved equally ruinous to both kingdoms, and which was at length terminated by a peace, that, after a series of losses and defeats, extricated the Swedish monarch with honour from a contest in which the most powerful nations in Europe were his enemies. The king was now left at leisure to turn his attention to the internal government of his kingdom: he enacted laws of justice and police, regulated the finances, declared Lutheranism the

the religion of the nation, prohibited the exercise of every other, but allowed secret toleration to the Calvinists and other reformed sects.

The authority which the senate had assumed, gave umbrage to the king and to the rest of the people. The senators claimed a middle rank between the sovereign and the states: they demanded a right of mediating between both; of reminding the king of the obligations he owed the people, and the subjects of the duty which they owed to their sovereign. The states appointed a committee to examine whether the authority assumed by the senate was founded on the laws of the realm, and perfectly constitutional. Their report was, that the king was bound to govern by the advice of the senate; who, by no law of the constitution had a right to the other claim they asserted. Charles, therefore, declared by an edict, that the statutes should remain in their full vigour; that he would govern by the advice of the senate; but that he should be judge of what affairs ought to be communicated to that body; and that he should alone possess a power of making alterations in the constituton. Thus did the government of Sweden become absolute and despotic.

Charles XI. died with the reputation of a wise and skilful prince, whose failings were obscured by the lustre of that glory, which he acquired by his political conduct. He left his kingdom independent, and his army and fleet on a respectable footing.

On the death of the late king, his son Charles XII. ascended the throne of Sweden, at the age of fifteen. What our fathers have seen, and what they have related to us concerning this prince, render probable A. D. 1697. the

the accounts which history has transmitted, respecting those heroes who inspired the multitude with their own passions, and hurried them on, blinded by the fanaticism of glory, to such excesses as entail misery on mankind, and involve nations in ruin. Obstinacy was the predominant feature in the character of Charles XII. According to the laws of Sweden, he was not entitled to the reins of government till the age of eighteen; but he almost immediately emancipated himself from the tutelage of his grandmother, placed himself at the head of affairs, and exhibited in his whole conduct a firmness and resolution which invariably attached to him his ministers, and generals.

The inexperience of the youthful monarch induced the kings of Poland and Denmark, and the czar of Russia, to enter into a confederacy for the purpose of wresting from him various provinces, which their respective states had ceded to his father and grandfather. Instead of being disconcerted at the news of this powerful combination, Charles seemed rather to rejoice at the opportunity it would afford him of displaying his courage and abilities. The Danes, commanded by the duke of Wurtemburg, and encouraged by the presence of their sovereign, invaded the duchy of Holstein, which belonged to the brother-in-law of Charles. The Swedish monarch was no sooner informed of this circumstance than he drew his sword never more to return it; he quitted his capital never again to revisit it; and, embarking his troops at Carlscroon, sailed for Denmark. The Danish fleet, unable to force the enemy, retired under the guns of Copenhagen, which was bombarded, and the king of Denmark was compelled

A. D. 1700.

up in Holstein by some Swedish frigates, that cruised on the coast.

In this critical season, the enterprising spirit of Charles suggested to him the means of finishing the war at once. Accordingly, he prepared to besiege Copenhagen by land, while the fleet blocked it up by sea. The citizens, filled with consternation, besought him not to bombard the town; and the king on horseback, and at the head of his regiment of guards, received the deputies, who fell on their knees before him, and to whom he granted their request, on consideration of their paying him a large sum of money. The king of Denmark, who was in a perilous situation, and whose capital and fleet were ready to fall into the hands of the enemy, concluded with Charles a treaty of peace, which was highly honourable to the Swedish monarch.

From that moment, the Swedes, after the example of their king, were seized with an enthusiasm which allowed no time for reflexion. Taxes, which are necessary in war, were considered as an honorary tribute; and every family wished to furnish a soldier. The troops were habituated to the difference of seasons, and the wants of nature; and bread, water, and arms, were all that a Swede required.

No sooner had Charles concluded the treaty with the king of Denmark than he turned his arms against the Russians, who had undertaken the siege of Narva with eighty thousand men. The Swedish monarch advanced to the relief of the place with only eight thousand troops. To some representations that were made to him on the great disparity of numbers, he replied, "What! "do you doubt whether the king of Sweden

" with eight thousand men, can beat the czar " of Russia with eighty thousand?" The Russians stood the shock with firmness; but after an engagement of three hours, their entrenchments were forced with great slaughter, and Charles entered Narva in triumph. On this occasion the czar Peter said, " I knew that the Swedes would beat us, but in " time they will teach us to become their con- " querors."

A. D. 1701.

Charles having passed the winter at Narva, entered Livonia, and appeared in the neighbourhood of Riga. He forced a passage over the Duna, on the banks of which were posted the Poles and Saxons, whom the Swedish monarch attacked with great bravery, and, after an obstinate and bloody engagement, gained a complete victory. He then advanced to Mittau, the capital of Courland, from whence he passed into Lithuania, and entered in triumph the town of Bergen, where the czar and the Polish sovereign had a few months before planned his destruction. Charles now formed the grand project of dethroning Augustus, king of Poland, by means of his own subjects. The Poles murmured on seeing their towns enslaved by Saxon garrisons, and their frontiers covered with Russian troops. More jealous of their liberty than ambitious of conquest, they considered the war with Sweden as an artful measure of the court, in order to furnish a pretext for the introduction of foreign soldiers.

Charles, being informed of the discontents of the Poles, entered into a secret correspondence with the malcontents, and marched to Warsaw, which opened its gates to him at the first summons. The two contending kings met in a s-

cious plain near Glissaw, between the capital and Cracow. The army of Augustus amounted to twenty-four thousand men, while that of Charles did not consist of more than half that number. The Swedish monarch, however, attacked the enemy with intrepidity; and, though the king of Poland performed every thing that could be expected from a brave prince fighting for his crown, he was defeated with great slaughter: the valour and good fortune of Charles prevailed, and he gained a complete victory. The king of Sweden directed his march to Cracow, which immediately surrendered; and Augustus fled into Saxony. A diet, that assembled at Warsaw, declared the elector of Saxony incapable of wearing the crown of Poland; and Charles, who said that he had more pleasure in giving away, than in conquering kingdoms, recommended to the assembly Stanislaus, a Polish nobleman, who was immediately raised to the throne.

The czar determined that sixty thousand Russians should attack the Swedes in their conquests. Accordingly, this prodigious force entered Poland, divided into separate armies, and was joined by a great number of Saxons and Cossacs. Charles attacked and defeated the Russian troops; and nothing could impede the progress, or equal the celerity, of the conquering Swedes. If a river interposed, they swam over it; and the Swedish monarch, at the head of his cavalry, marched thirty leagues in twenty-four hours. Struck with consternation and dismay at these rapid movements, which appeared altogether miraculous, and reduced to a small number by their successive defeats, the Russians retired be-

yond the Boristhenes, and left Augustus to his fate. That monarch was soon after compelled to renounce for ever all pretensions to the crown of Poland, and to acknowledge Stanislaus lawful sovereign of the kingdom.

The prediction, however, which the czar uttered after the battle of Narva, was verified at Pultowa. Charles had imprudently marched his army into Russia; where his troops were worn down with hunger and fatigue, and continually harrassed by the enemy. The czar, having collected his forces, advanced to the relief of Pultowa, which was invested by the Swedish monarch. Charles, who had been wounded in a former engagement, was much indisposed. Betrayed, however, by a false idea of honour, he would not wait for the enemy in his entrenchments; but ordered his troops to attack the Russian camp. The litter, in which the Swedish monarch caused himself to be carried, was twice overturned, and the second time broken, by the enemy's cannon. After an obstinate and bloody engagement, the Swedish army was entirely routed and dispersed; nine thousand of the vanquished were left dead on the field of battle; and a great number surrendered themselves prisoners of war. Charles, accompanied by three hundred of his guards, escaped with difficulty to Bender, a Turkish town in Moldavia.

A. D. 1709.

It is a maxim of the Turks to consider as sacred the person of those unfortunate princes who take refuge in the dominions of the grand-seignior, and to supply them with the conveniences of life. Agreeably to these liberal ideas, the king of Sweden was received at Ben-

der

der with every mark of respect. The Turks and neighbouring Greeks, who had heard of his exploits, flocked in crowds to see him. His inflexible resolution to abstain from wine, and his regularity in publicly assisting at divine service, made the Mahometans consider him as a true Mussulman; and inspired them with an ardent desire of marching under him to the conquest of Russia.

That idea still occupied the mind of Charles; and, though a fugitive, and destitute of resources, he still hoped to dethrone the czar. He solicited the assistance of the Ottoman Porte; and Achmet III. the reigning sultan, sent him a present of a thousand ducats, while the grand-vizier said to his envoy, "I will take your king "in one hand, and a sword in the other, and "conduct him to Moscow at the head of two "hundred thousand men." The czar's money, however, changed the sentiments of the Turkish minister, who laid aside all thoughts of a war with Russia. The military chest, which Peter had taken at Pultowa, furnished him with new arms against the vanquished Charles, whose blood-earned treasures were turned against himself. The Swede, nevertheless, found means to defeat the cabal by which he was oppressed, and to procure the disgrace and banishment of the grand-vizier.

The new minister, who was a man of incorruptible integrity, could not endure the thoughts of a war against Russia, which he considered as equally unnecessary and unjust; but he was induced to observe the rights of hospitality to the king of Sweden, to whom he sent a very considerable sum of money. That present was ac-

companied by a letter from the grand-vizier, who advised him, in the most respectful terms, to return to his own states through Germany, or in some of the French vessels which lay in the harbour of Constantinople. But the haughty and inflexible Swede, who still believed that he should be able to engage the Turks in his project of dethroning the czar, obstinately rejected this, and every other proposal for his quiet return to his own dominions.

Another change of ministry inspired Charles with new hopes; and, at length, the grand-seignior gave orders to attack the territories of Peter with two hundred thousand men. The czar, informed of the determination of the Ottoman court, marched his army into Moldavia, where, on the banks of the Pruth, he found himself in a perilous situation, being surrounded by the enemy. From this imminent danger he was rescued by the dexterity of Catharine, who had not yet attained the rank of empress, and who gained the grand-vizier and his council by valuable presents. The king of Sweden, who had been informed of the perilous situation of the czar, hastened from Bender to behold the ruin of his rival, and arrived in the Turkish camp on the day subsequent to the treaty.

Being told of the peace which the grand-vizier had concluded with Peter, Charles was inflamed with resentment, and reproached the Turkish minister for his conduct. "I have a "right," said the grand-vizier calmly, "to "make either peace or war; and our law com-"mands us to spare our enemies, when they im-"plore our clemency." The Turkish minister, however, was disgraced for not paying more re-

gard

gard to the claims of Charles. The grand-vizier, who succeeded him, was still less disposed to favour the views of the Swedish monarch, and reduced his pension. Every attempt of Charles to kindle a new war between the Turks and Russians proved ineffectual; and the divan, wearied with his perpetual importunities, resolved to send him back into Sweden, attended by a sufficient guard. The fugitive, however, still persevered in his demand of an army.

Indignant at the conduct of Charles, the sultan convoked an extraordinary divan, and spoke to the following effect:—"I have scarcely known "the king of Sweden, except by his defeat at "Pultowa, and by his request that I would grant "him an asylum in my dominions. I have not, "I believe, any need of his assistance, nor any "cause to love or to fear him. Nevertheless, "without being influenced by any other motives than the hospitality of a Mussulman, I "have received, protected, and maintained himself, his ministers, officers, and soldiers; and, "for the space of three years and a half, have "loaded him with favours. He asked money "of me to pay his expences, though I defray "them all: I sent him more than he had demanded. I have offered him a guard to "escort him into his own dominions; but he "refuses to depart, under pretence that it is "not sufficiently numerous, and requires a "whole army. Will it, therefore, be a violation of the laws of hospitality to send that "prince away; and will foreign powers charge "me with injustice and cruelty if I shall employ "force in compelling him to depart?"

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The council unanimously determined, that compulsory means should be adopted, if necessary. An order to that effect was immediately sent to the bashaw of Bender, who waited on the king of Sweden, and informed him of it. In return for the gentleness and delicacy with which he acquitted himself of the former part of his commission, he received from Charles this brutal answer:—"Obey your master, if you "dare; and leave me instantly!" The bashaw needed not this insult to animate him to his duty. He coolly prepared to execute the orders of his sovereign; and Charles, in spite of the earnest entreaties of his friends and servants, resolved with three hundred Swedes to oppose an army of twenty thousand Turks and Tartars.

Accordingly, the king of Sweden having caused regular entrenchments to be thrown up for the purpose of defence, the enemy attacked the Swedish fortifications, and the cannon began to play. The little camp was instantly forced, and most of the three hundred Swedes were made prisoners. Charles, who was on horseback, sought refuge in his house, together with a few general officers and domestics. With these, he fired from the windows upon the Turks and Tartars, of whom two hundred were killed, and bravely maintained himself till the edifice was in flames. In this extremity, a centinel had the presence of mind to observe, that the chancery-house, which was only about fifty yards distant, had a stone roof, and was proof against fire, and in which they might defend themselves to the last. "There is a true Swede!", cried Charles, rushing out, like a madman, at the head of a few desperadoes. From respect to the person

son of the king, the Turks at first recoiled; but, recollecting the orders they had received, they surrounded the Swedes, and made them prisoners. Charles, being in boots, entangled himself with his spurs, and fell; on which, a number of janizaries sprang upon him. In order to save himself the mortification of surrendering his sword, he threw it into the air; and some of the Turks taking hold of his legs, and others of his arms, he was carried in that manner to the tent of the bashaw. That officer, in obedience to the orders of the divan, sent the Swedish monarch in a covered chariot to Demotica, a small town at the distance of ten leagues from Adrianople, where the emperor then resided with his court. A. D. 1713.

In consequence, however, of the intrigues of Charles, a sudden change took place in the seraglio. One vizier was disgraced, and another strangled. But, though the ministry of the Porte was changed, the condition of the Swedish monarch continued the same, and he remained a prisoner at Demotica. Lest the Turks should not pay him the respect due to his royal person, or exact from him any thing beneath his dignity, he determined to confine himself to his bed, during his captivity, under pretence of sickness; and to this resolution he adhered for ten months.

At length, Charles, despairing of arming the Porte in his favour, signified to the grand-vizier his desire of returning, through Germany, to his own dominions. The Turkish minister endeavoured to facilitate that event. On his approach to the frontiers of Germany, the king of Sweden had the satisfaction to learn that the emperor

emperor had given orders he should be received in every part of the imperial territories, with all the respect due to his rank. Charles, however, had no inclination to exhibit the prisoner of Bender. He, therefore, dismissed the Turkish convoy that attended him on the confines of Transilvania, and assembled his Swedish followers, to whom he said, "Give yourselves no "uneasiness concerning my person; but repair "with all possible speed to Stralsund." He took with him only a young colonel, for whom he entertained an affection, and set out in disguise in the dress of a German officer. At the end of the first day's ride, his companion, overpowered by fatigue, was obliged to stop; but Charles pursued his route through all Germany; and, after a journey of sixteen days, arrived at midnight at the gates of Stralsund. The centinel refused to inform the governor of the arrival of an unknown person, and the king threatened to have him hanged the next morning. On the gates being opened, the stranger was introduced to the governor, who, half asleep, asked him whether he brought any news from the king, whose arrival a vague rumour taught the people to expect. "What! Ducker!" exclaimed Charles, "do not my most faithful ser-"vants remember me?" Recognising his sovereign, the governor fell on his knees before him; and the intelligence of the king's arrival was instantly spread through the city by the ringing of bells and the roar of artillery. Starting from their slumbers, the inhabitants embraced and congratulated each other on the joyful event. Charles, having passed sixteen nights without lying down to rest, threw himself on a bed,

bed, where he slept a few hours; after which he rose and reviewed the troops of the garrison.

During the inactivity of the Swedish monarch at Bender and Demotica, his enemies had been busily employed in attacking on every side his abandoned kingdom. The Danes asserted their ancient pretensions; Russia possessed herself of the provinces bordering on her dominions; and Brandenburg and Hanover enlarged their territories at the expence of Sweden. Through the influence of the czar, Stanislaus had been driven from the throne of Poland, on which Augustus was replaced. Embarrassed, and ignorant how to stop the progress of invasion, the senators proposed to treat with the enemies of their country, but were answered, that no dependence could be placed on an assembly which was so enslaved; that when they had attempted to remonstrate on the conduct of Charles, he wrote to his chancellor, "If they "prove refractory, I will send one of my boots "to govern them."

Whilst the king lived in a state of impotence at Bender, where he was only tolerated and supported through favour, and saw no probable resource within his reach, he was told that Stanislaus wished to renounce the Polish diadem, for the sake of enjoying peace. "If Stanislaus," said he, "will not consent to be king of Poland, "I must chuse another." After Charles had been taken prisoner, and was on the road to Adrianople, he was informed that that prince was also in the hands of the Turks; upon which he replied to the person who announced this intelligence, "Run to him, my dear Fabricius!

"Tell

" Tell him never to make peace with Augustus ; " and assure him that our affairs will soon " change."

No sooner had the Swedish monarch arrived at Stralsund, than, without considering the wretched state of his affairs, he immediately dispatched orders to all his generals to renew the war with fresh vigour. Intoxicated by the phrensy of glory, all the young men crowded to the standard of their king, and none remained for the labours of agriculture, except the aged and the infirm, who were little qualified to save Sweden from a famine with which she was threatened.

A. D. 1715. On opening the campaign, however, Charles was surrounded by such a multitude of enemies, that valour or conduct, without a greater force, could be of little service. The combined army of Prussians, Danes, and Saxons invested Stralsund; in hopes that the king would there perish, be taken prisoner, or compelled to make peace. Charles, who sustained the siege in person, performed, as usual, prodigies of valour. Fearing to fall into the hands of his enemies, he embarked in a small vessel, and, by favour of the night, passed safely through the Danish fleet, and was landed in Sweden; and the town capitulated the next day.

The baron Goertz, Charles's minister, a man of a bold and active genius, and fertile in resources, induced him to adopt a different plan of warfare, and to conclude a peace with Russia. Having, therefore, effected a reconciliation between his master and the czar, he suggested to Charles that it would be an unimportant vengeance

geance to dismember the states of Hanover, or even to subdue the whole, and that he ought to snatch the crown of England from George I. who had taken part against him during his misfortunes, and to reinstate the family of king James on the throne of Great Britain. In order to accomplish this object, Goertz formed an alliance between Sweden and Russia, by the intervention of the cardinal Alberoni, an Italian, a man of equal activity and enterprize; and the court of Madrid projected a marriage between James's son, commonly denominated the Pretender, and Anne Petrowna, daughter of the czar.

The impetuosity of Charles XII. the alliance he had formed, and the ambition of his minister, seemed ready to overturn the system of Europe. In the interval, however, of preparing for that great enterprize, the Swedish monarch thought proper to invade Norway, in order to wrest it from the king of Denmark, and thus indemnify himself for the provinces which he had ceded to the czar. Notwithstanding the chain of steep mountains, which form a barrier between the two states, Charles made an incursion into Norway, penetrated to the heart of the kingdom, and, in the month of December, when the ground was covered with ice and snow, and the air intensely cold, laid siege to Fredericshall, a strongly fortified town. Many of the soldiers were frozen to death, and, in order to animate his troops, the Swedish monarch exposed himself to all the rigour of the climate, and to the dang[illegible] of the siege; and, covered only with his cloak, usually slept in the open air! One night, as he viewed them carrying on their ap-

proaches by star-light, he was killed by an half-pound ball, discharged from a cannon loaded with grape-shot. Though he expired without a groan, the moment he had received the blow he had instinctively grasped the hilt of his sword, and was found in that position, so extremely characteristic of his mind.

A. D. 1718. Thus fell Charles XII. a prince possessed of many eminent, and few amiable qualities. He was rigidly just, but void of lenity; romantickly brave, yet blind to consequences; profusely generous, without knowing how to oblige; temperate, without delicacy; a stranger to the pleasures of society, and only slightly acquainted with books; a Goth in his manners, and a savage in his resentments. In short, he was little formed to conciliate love, or procure esteem. But his wonderful intrepidity and perseverance in enterprize, his firmness under misfortune, his contempt of danger, and his enthusiastic passion for glory, will ever command the admiration of mankind.

CHAP. IV.

From the Death of Charles XII. to the present Time.

A. D. 1719. ON the death of Charles XII. his sister Ulrica-Eleonora, wife to the prince of Hesse, assumed the Swedish sceptre, as the gift of the states, not as her own hereditary right. The senate made some conditions with that princess, which emancipated the assembly from the state of subjection, in which it had

had been held by the late monarch. The oppression of the king was not so much attributed to Charles as to his minister Goertz, who treated the people with great pride and hauteur, and who, after the death of his master, atoned by the loss of his head for his past influence, and for the imperious and arbitrary use which he had made of it. The restrictions imposed upon the regal power restored some equilibrium to the government, and pleased the Swedes, who allowed Eleonora to associate her husband, Frederic, prince of Hesse, with herself on the throne. A. D. 1720.

No sooner was the new government established, than the Swedes turned their views to peace, and signed three treaties with the belligerent powers; one with the king of Great Britain, as elector of Hanover, to whom the queen of Sweden ceded the duchies of Bremen and Verden, in consideration of a million of rix-dollars; another with the king of Prussia, who restored Stralsund and the isle of Rugen, and retained Stetin and the isles of Usedom and Wollin; and a third with the Danish monarch, who kept part of the duchy of Sleswick, and gave up Wismar, on condition that the fortifications should not be rebuilt. Russia still continued to carry on the war; but an English squadron being sent to the assistance of Sweden, the czar recalled his fleet, and a peace was at length concluded between the two hostile crowns, by which Peter retained possession of the provinces of Livonia, Estonia, and Ingria, with parts of Carelia and of Finland. A. D. 1721.

The states of Sweden at this time required, indeed, that peace should be procured, whatever might be the concessions demanded; and the condition of this kingdom makes us shudder, and calls forth our lamentations for those nations governed by princes who are infatuated by a passion for war. All the veteran soldiers had disappeared, being either killed or captured by the enemy. The armies were composed of young recruits, raw and inexperienced in the profession of arms, and who had not the opportunity of acquiring military skill from the superintendence and example of Charles. The taxes were numerous and oppressive, and the people groaned under the weight of their burdens. Destitute of money and credit, Sweden was unable to resist any longer the attacks of her enemies. Her commerce was ruined, industry unnerved, and the marine destroyed. Entire provinces were covered with ruins; and consternation and dismay pervaded the whole kingdom.

Frederic and his consort, having thus restored peace and tranquillity to their subjects, by the treaties concluded with the belligerent powers, endeavoured to re-establish the prosperity and commerce of the nation. But the success of their operations was impeded by the refractory and turbulent disposition of the senate; who, too proud of the power which they had regained after the death of Charles, became jealous of the power of the king, and on almost every occasion opposed his wishes. After the death of his wife, Ulrica, who was greatly beloved by the Swedes, Frederic stood in need of all his prudence and moderation to support his authority,

and

and to procure a settlement of the succession, without disturbances. The states nominated Adolphus-Frederic, who was a near kinsman of the deceased queen, and of the house of Holstein, to be hereditary prince of the crown of Sweden. A. D. 1751.

The long reigns of these monarchs, though peaceable, were nevertheless not free from troubles. In Sweden factions arose which became the watch-words of an entire nation, and whose vulgar appellations were the "Hats," and the "Caps." The former consisted of those that were attached to the royal prerogative, and were desirous of re-establishing the administration of government on the footing on which it had stood during the reigns of Charles XI. Gustavus-Adolphus, and Charles-Gustavus. It was well known that this party, with which the nobles and clergy sided, were favoured by the king and his council. The sentiments of the Caps were directly adverse to those of the Hats, and breathed nothing but the liberty and privileges of the senate. With these were united the principal burghers, and the most distinguished members of the order of the peasants. Besides those two factions, a third party was formed, called the "Hunting-caps," who consisted of individuals from all the different classes of the people; and who, by their accession or defection, gave to or took from either of the others a preponderant influence.

Little repressed by Frederic, and still less restrained by the feeble interposition of Adolphus-Frederic, the Swedish senate had assumed a sway which frequently mortified the two mo-

A. D. 1751. narchs. On the death of the former, the latter prince ascended the throne of Sweden without the least disturbance; and, of his own accord, took an oath, in the assembly of the senate, that he would never attempt to introduce despotic authority, but maintain the liberties of the people, and rule according to the established laws and government of the kingdom. But the senate, by dint of remonstrances and of opposition to the royal will, in matters which seemed to affect the public welfare, had acquired a degree of credit, which rendered the Caps predominant. The king had been obliged to abandon to popular justice, or vengeance, valuable generals and envied ministers, whose zeal for the support of the regal authority and the views of France had given offence.

A. D. 1755. Indignant at what he deemed the undue influence of the senate, Adolphus endeavoured to change the form of government, and to increase the power of the crown by diminishing that of the states. The design, however, being discovered, several persons of rank were convicted as principals in this conspiracy, and condemned to suffer death. The Swedish monarch threatened to resign the crown, and to retire into his hereditary dominions; but he was dissuaded from his purpose by the people, who espoused his cause in opposition to the senate. The party of the Hats, however, had not the skill to avail themselves of the ascendency which the king gained in the general diet. They constituted, indeed, a majority in that assembly; but, as they did not possess any fixed plan, nor knew on what to determine,

determine, the meeting was of no real service to the monarch.

Adolphus concluded a treaty with the French and Imperial courts; and the Swedes, after many debates between the king and the senate, declared war against the Prussian monarch, and invaded Pomerania. Their first acts of hostility were directed against the towns of Anclam and Demmin: and they afterwards attacked the fortress of Pennemunde, on the river Pene, of which they made themselves masters. General Lehwald, however, who commanded the royal army of Prussia, attacked the Swedes with thirty thousand men, and compelled them to abandon their several conquests, and to retire under the cannon of Stralsund; and the enemy possessed themselves of a great part of Swedish Pomerania. But the Swedes afterwards defeated the Prussians in different engagements, and over-ran Pomerania; though they were always compelled to retire to Stralsund, before the end of each campaign. The Swedish senate having become little better than pensioners to the crown of France, it was chiefly through the influence of the court of Versailles, who intrigued with the senators, that Adolphus had been obliged to take part in the war against Prussia: but, as this measure was not only disagreeable to the nation in general but to the king himself, the Swedes never made so mean and despicable an appearance. Accordingly, after several spiritless campaigns, a peace was concluded between the two nations, which left matters just as they stood at the commencement of the contest. A. D. 1757. A. D. 1762.

Adolphus

Adolphus-Frederic, who was of a mild and pacific disposition, was distinguished for candour, and endued with a beneficence and goodness of heart which render his memory respected and revered to the present time. His reign, however, was turbulent, and he died dispirited, leaving the crown, at his death, to his son Gustavus, who had already felt its thorns.

A. D. 1771.

Gustavus III. who, at the demise of his father, was travelling in foreign countries, was no sooner informed of that event than he hastened out of France, and arrived at Stockholm, where he was received with the most lively acclamations of joy, and proclaimed king of Sweden. Born with talents that would have reflected lustre on any rank, or any station, he cultivated with care his natural endowments; and his education was suitable to his birth, and excellently adapted to a situation which seemed to require the greatest exertion of abilities. By a graceful and commanding oratory, and the most insinuating manner and address, he engaged the hearts of those who beheld him only in public; and by an extent of knowledge and depth of judgment he excited the approbation of others, who had an opportunity of approaching his person. They could not, however, suspect him of that genius for intrigue, of that bold and enterprising spirit, by which he was afterwards distinguished: nor could they hope that a prince, possessed of such abilities, whilst he exerted himself in promoting his own peculiar interests, should nevertheless endeavour to increase the happiness and prosperity of the people. He cultivated with equal success the art of governing

ing and of pleasing; and he knew in what manner to gain the respect and obtain the affections of his subjects. Under the appearance of the most disinterested patriotism, he concealed an ambition great as his talents; and covered it with a zeal for the welfare of his subjects, which might prevent the most sagacious from penetrating his designs on the liberties of his country.

Such were the talents, such was the ambition, of a prince destined to wield a sceptre that could afford no scope for the one, no gratification for the other. Master of every popular art in a popular government, he had to submit to the caprice of a senate, or the dictates of a foreign minister. Fully equal to the task of governing others, he was allowed no will of his own: possessed of the affections of his people, he was only to enjoy the name and shadow of royalty: and he was to refrain from grasping at that power which formed the first object of his wishes.

The demonstrations of joy testified by the people on the king's arrival at Stockholm were extreme. Gustavus received all who approached him with amiable affability, and extended his popularity to the remotest part of his dominions. Twice a week he gave audience to his people, and listened to the meanest of his subjects with the dignity of a sovereign, and the tenderness of a father. The Swedish monarch endeavoured to persuade the principal men in the nation, that his attachment to the constitution of his country was sincere and inviolable; that he was perfectly satisfied with the share of power which the laws had allotted him; and

that

that his greatest glory consisted in being th first citizen of a free and independent people. These professions excited the suspicions of a few; but they lulled great numbers into a fatal security. Those, who possessed a greater share of penetration, perceived that, notwithstanding the king's outward appearance of impartiality, his favourites were all selected from the faction of the Hats; and that the whole administration acted conformably to the court of Versailles.

Gustavus thought it necessary to make the experiment at a considerable distance from the metropolis, in order that it might operate, in some degree, before the senate and states should receive information of it, and acquire a maturity of strength before they could impede its force. The small city and strong fortress of Christianstadt in Scania, about two hundred and fifty miles from Stockholm, seemed to afford every advantage for the purpose, and was accordingly selected. Prince Charles, the king's brother, set out for that province, and prince Frederic-Adolphus went to the neighbouring territory of Ostrogothia; both having regiments and principal commands in the army, and being greatly beloved by the troops.

A. D. 1772.

Every thing now being in readiness, an insurrection was excited among the garrison of Christianstadt; and one Hellechius, a captain, at the head of the soldiers, seized on the magazines, arms, and fortifications. Prince Charles, who was at Carlscroon when the news arrived of the revolt, immediately embraced the opportunity, which his rank and quality afforded him, of assembling the troops, of whom he took the command,

command, and marched towards Christianstadt. His brother, prince Frederic, at the same time, put himself at the head of the soldiers in Ostrogothia.

In the mean time, the misunderstanding between the king and the senate, without breaking forth into open rupture, had manifested itself by alarming preparations. The king had surrounded his person with a guard of one hundred and fifty men, who never quitted him. The different strong posts in Stockholm had been seized by the senate, who had nominated, as governor of the city, a man entirely devoted to them. The principal officers of the army were Caps; and, without cashiering those suspected of attachment to the king, the senate removed them from their respective corps under pretext of various services; insomuch that the senatorial assembly could be certain of collecting around them the different regiments, whenever they chose to command their attendance.

No sooner was the senate informed of the insurrection at Christianstadt, and of the subsequent proceedings of the king's brothers, than, sensible that the troops quartered in Stockholm were too much attached to Gustavus to place any dependence on their fidelity, they dispatched orders to the regiments of Upland and Sundermania to march with the greatest expedition to the capital. They commanded the cavalry, composed of the burghers, to mount their horses, and to fix patroles in all proper and convenient parts of the city and suburbs, and appointed the senator count Kalling, who was also considered as prime minister, to be general in chief, with all the authority they could

confer. The king was also required not to depart from Stockholm, and desired to recall his brothers without delay.

Though Gustavus seemed totally dormant and inactive with respect to the present transactions, it is evident that he was taking the most effectual measures to accomplish the great designs he had in view, to the success of which nothing contributed so much as the admirable silence and secrecy with which they were conducted: but things were now come to a crisis which would no longer admit of disguise and dissimulation. The arrival of the two regiments, which had been sent for by the senate, might have overthrown the whole project; and the king, therefore, precipitated matters to an immediate conclusion.

Early in the morning of the nineteenth of August, Gustavus sent for all the Hats, whom he thought attached to his person, mounted on horseback, and reviewed the regiment of artillery. As he passed through the streets, he showed himself more civil than usual to all he met; and bowed familiarly to the lowest of the people. On returning to the palace, he took the commissioned and non-commissioned officers into the guard house, and harangued them with all that eloquence of which he was so perfect a master. He insinuated that his life was in danger, and exposed to them, in the strongest light, the wretched state of the kingdom, the shackles in which it was held by means of foreign gold, and the dissentions and troubles which had distracted the diet for so long a time. He assured them that his only design was to banish corruption, restore true liberty, and revive the ancient lustre

lustre of Sweden; and, disclaiming all absolute power, concluded his speech with the following words: "I am obliged to defend my own li-" berty, and that of the kingdom, against the " aristocracy which reigns. Will you be faith-" ful to me, as your forefathers were to Gusta-" vus Vasa and Gustavus Adolphus? and I will " risk my life for your welfare, and for that " of my country." A gloomy silence pervaded the whole assembly. "What!" exclaimed the king, astonished and confused, "does nobody " answer me?"—"Yes," replied a young officer, "we will all follow you. Is there any man " among us so base as to desert his king?"—These words decided the business; and each individual present took the oath of fidelity to the king.

The officers were ordered to assemble the soldiers; and Gustavus advanced from the guard-house to the parade, in order to harangue the troops, who were wholly unacquainted with his designs, and had been accustomed to pay obedience only to the commands of the senate. He addressed them in nearly the same words that he had used to the officers, and obtained equal success. In the mean time, the emissaries of the king had spread a report that Gustavus had been arrested by order of the senate. The populace, therefore, flocked to the palace in great numbers; and, arriving just as his majesty had concluded his speech to the guards, testified by reiterated acclamations their joy at seeing him safe.

The senators were now immediately secured. They had beheld from the window of the council-chamber the tumult on the parade; and, at a

loss to know the meaning of the shouts which they heard, attempted to send some of their members to gain intelligence of what was passing. But thirty grenadiers, with their bayonets fixed, opposed their egress, and informed them that it was the king's pleasure they should remain where they were. The senators began to threaten, but were only answered by having the gates shut and locked upon them.

Gustavus then mounted his horse, and being followed by his officers, with their swords drawn, a large body of soldiers, and numbers of the populace, paraded the streets of Stockholm. He ordered the gates of the city to be shut; and, in the name of the senate, sent orders to the troops on their march, who were now not more than a league distant, to return to their former stations. Ignorant of the transactions in the city, and supposing that the command had really come from the senate, they immediately obeyed. With the same facility Gustavus made himself master of all the posts, and obliged all the people to take a new oath of allegiance to him.

Thus was this great and unparalleled revolution accomplished; and an extensive nation deprived of its liberties in a single morning, without bloodshed, without noise, without tumult, and without opposition. The king repaired to the castle; and, having sent for the foreign ministers, informed them that it was with the greatest sorrow he had agreed to the measure of which they had been witnesses, and which he had been obliged to take for the security of his person, and the prosperity of the state.

On the following day, which was the 21st of August, the king assembled the diet, in order to abolish

abolish the old, and establish the new, form of government. Gustavus took such decisive measures, for the completion of this great act, as committed nothing to the hazard of chance, or to the caprice of fortune. A large detachment of the guards were posted in the morning in the square where the house of nobles stands; the palace was invested on every side with troops; all the garrison were under arms; cannon were planted in the great court of the hall, where the states were assembled; and every thing had the appearance, not only of war, but of the immediate attack of an enemy.

Being thus conveniently secured in this place of terrors, it was not a matter of much consideration whether they should accede to the propositions that were to be made to them. The king entered the hall in his royal attire; and, having the silver hammer of Gustavus Adolphus in his hand, he made with it the signal for silence. After a speech of considerable length, in which he recounted the motives which had induced him to act in the present manner, and the causes that had occasioned the late transactions, he read to them the plan of a new form of government, which he had ready prepared. This piece, which consisted of fifty-seven articles, was of great length, and imported that the king was to chuse the senate himself; that he was to have the power of convoking, proroguing, and dissolving the diet at his pleasure; that he was to have the sole disposition of the army, navy, and finances, and of all the employments civil and military. It did not expressly ordain that the king should have a right to impose new taxes; but it provided that those which already existed

should be perpetual; and that, in case of hostile invasion, or other urgent necessity, the monarch was at liberty to augment them at his discretion, until there should be an opportunity of assembling a diet. Finally, it decreed that the states should not deliberate on any matters, except such as were laid before them by the king.

The whole of this piece being read, Curvus asked them if they would give him their oath to observe this form of government. We may readily conceive that no assembly was ever more unanimous: there was not a single dissentient voice, nor any debate upon the subject; and the whole diet was immediately sworn in the presence of the king. The new form was then signed and sealed; and, this great work being finally accomplished, Gustavus, with an appearance of piety, observed that it was necessary to return thanks to Almighty God for his assistance on this occasion, and taking a psalm-book out of his pocket, began to sing the Te Deum in which he was accompanied by the whole assembly with great reverence.

The constitution was sent into the different provinces, and every where received without murmur, and without opposition. The king was not negligent in putting the internal government of the kingdom into hands in which he could confide: nor did he forget to provide for those who had distinguished themselves in favour of the revolution. Prince Charles was created duke of Sunderfhania, and appointed to the government of Scania, Halland, Blackingen, Bahur-Leha, and Smaland; prince Frederic Adolphus, duke of Ostrogothia, with the important province of Finland; and the king's mother,

mother, the queen dowager, was appointed governess of the Swedish provinces in Germany.

In the first diet, however, which met after the revolution, it was manifest that the seeds of dissention had taken deep root in the minds even of those who filled the highest offices of the state. In this assembly the king endeavoured to re-establish the ancient classes of the Swedish nobles; the high nobility, the equestrian order, and the gentry. Each class was to vote separately; and, as every question was to be decided by the majority of the classes, which Gustavus flattered himself would be easily obtained, he hoped that the people would be amused with the show of representation, while the real power remained in his own hands. But in this expectation, the views of the sovereign were disappointed: the higher orders who felt their own consequence, became untractable; and the lower house, who saw themselves degraded by his arrangement, entered into a state of implacable opposition. A motion was made to ascertain and limit the royal prerogative, and Gustavus found it necessary to dissolve the states. A. D. 1778.

Another diet, which the Swedish monarch assembled, was not more satisfactory to his views. Most of the measures proposed by the king were rejected; and, in order to obtain one point, the establishment of granaries under his inspection, he was obliged to relinquish a prerogative attached to the crown by the old constitution, from the reign of Gustavus Adolphus, that, when the orders of the diet should be divided on any question, the determination should be referred to the sovereign. This diet was dissolved with unequivocal symptoms of dis- A. D. 1786.

dissatisfaction, and with mutual recriminations between the king and its leading members.

Hurried on by that love of glory which all nations extol, though it is generally the cause of their misfortunes, Gustavus was not satisfied with the celebrity that he had acquired by the revolution affected in his own country: he had frequently said that a war was necessary, in order to characterize a reign; and in vain did his uncle, the Great Frederic of Prussia, recommend to him pacific measures. The Swedish monarch, not contented with repose, desired at all events to be a conqueror. Though Gustavus had added to the royal power in Sweden, he was still the monarch of a proud and independent people: his rights, though extended, were not unlimited; and the constitution, which he himself had digested and sworn to maintain, invested him with every power necessary to defend his dominions; but expressly denied him that of undertaking an offensive war, without the consent of the four orders of the kingdom. He pretended to be alarmed at the armament which the empress of Russia was fitting out against the Ottoman Porte, and presented to the Russian court a menacing note, by which he required Catharine to disarm, and to accept his mediation between her and the Turks, to restore to Turkey all that had been taken from it during the last war, and to reinstate Sweden in the possession of Finland and Ingria, even to within two leagues of Petersburg. He insisted that the court of Russia should return a *Yes* or *No*, without modification, and declared war in case of refusal.

A. D. 1788.

Not waiting for an answer to this extraordinary note,

note, he put himself at the head of his army, and advanced to the frontiers of Finland. He refused all conference with generals, whom the empress sent to negociate with him; and he every where spread the assertion that the Russians intended to invade Sweden, and had already committed hostilities. Catharine, who was proud of her power, and intoxicated by the splendour of her reign, had been lulled into an imprudent confidence, and could not believe that the Swedish monarch would dare to attack her. The infatuation of the empress was so great, that her squadron had received orders to sail for the Archipelago; and, if Gustavus had been four days later in declaring war, he would have found the sea open, Cronstadt without ships, and Petersburg destitute of defence.

In proportion as the empress had been blinded by security, the more lively was her alarm. All the peasants and domestics were armed, and sent into Finland. Consternation and dismay reigned at Petersburg; the most alarming and false reports were propagated; the Swedes were every moment expected to arrive; and the departure of Catharine for Moscow was considered as certain. But the tardiness of Gustavus, and the activity of the Russian ministers, soon dispelled this fear. The two hostile fleets met and engaged; Te Deum was sung by each party, and both claimed the victory. Both armaments suffered considerably; but that of Catharine kept the sea, while the Swedish squadrons returned to port. In this engagement the duke of Sudermania acquired reputation, as a naval commander. Gustavus having intercepted a letter, by which he understood that twelve thousand

sand Russians were advancing against him, re-embarked his troops with precipitation, and no affair of importance followed.

This unsuccessful attempt, and the declaration of Denmark, which had espoused the cause of Russia and was making formidable preparations in Norway, excited a murmur in the Swedish army; which was increased by its being known that the Russians had not meditated an attack upon Sweden, and that the king had engaged in an unconstitutional war, the commencement of which was humiliating, and the consequences dangerous. Enraged at seeing themselves at once deceived and abandoned, the commanders openly expressed their dissatisfaction, and did not dissemble their uneasiness. Every thing announced another revolution, which the faults of Gustavus had prepared; but from which his activity and good fortune preserved him. The kings of England and Prussia, by their menaces, stopped the Danes, and compelled them to make peace. The Swedish monarch, supported by the people whom he knew how to animate, terrified the troops, and kept the nobles within bounds. The army, perceiving the union of the king and the people, and learning the defection of the Danes, denounced and abandoned the authors of the sedition, whose schemes it had previously approved. Gustavus imprisoned the leaders of the revolt; and, by judiciously distributing largesses, by promises, by severely punishing some of the rebels, and extending clemency to others, he re-established discipline among the troops, and by his presence re-animated their courage.

Having thus restored order to the army, the Swedish

Swedish monarch was indebted for some advantages to the skilful valour of general Steding. His flotilla, which had been beaten by the Russians, and shut up in the gulph of Viburg, had exposed Gustavus to the loss of his ships and his liberty. But, at the moment when he was considered as destitute of resourses, he heroically quitted this dangerous position, made his way through the Russians who surrounded him, braved the terrible fire they poured on him, and at once fulfilled the duties of a general and a soldier. Having forced the enemy's line, he rejoined his ships of war, destroyed the gallies of the prince of Nassau, and captured or sunk forty-four vessels. By this victory he frightened the empress, who might almost have heard from her palace the report of the enemy's cannon. He then returned to his own posts crowned with glory; but disgusted with a war which had exposed him to so many dangers, cost him so much blood, and the success of which had realised none of the hopes he had conceived. At length the courts of Russia and Stockholm abjured their hatred of each other, renounced their pretensions, terminated their hostilities, and, through the intervention of Spain, concluded a peace, by which each retained what it before possessed. The treaties of Abo and of Nistadt were renewed and confirmed; and Gustavus renounced all claims to the possessions conquered by his ancestors. A. D. 1790.

Whilst the war continued, Gustavus had been compelled to assemble the states of the kingdom, in order to raise supplies for the exigencies of the government; and the discontents, which had prevailed in the former sessions, seemed to increase

crease in this. Some popular laws were passed; and the privileges, which the nobility had before exclusively enjoyed, were extended to all the inhabitants of the nation. The king, at length, obtained his object with respect to the supplies; but concluded the diet by abolishing the power of the senate, which was a nearer approach to arbitrary power, and extremely obnoxious to the nobles.

Averse as the king must necessarily have been rendered to these assemblies, his necessities once more obliged him to summon a diet, which was convened after a notice of three weeks, was held at Geffle, a solitary situation on the Bothnic gulph and seventy miles from Stockholm, and, during the whole of its deliberations, was surrounded by mercenary troops. By this means the expectations of the public were completely frustrated: no reform was affected, nor any censure passed on the king for the manifest infraction of both the old and new constitutions, by entering into war without the consent of the states.

A. D. 1792.

But though the dissatisfaction which the conduct of Gustavus had excited was thus suppressed, the evil was not eradicated, and the sword of faction impended over his devoted head. The king had resolved to put himself at the head of the French emigrants, whose hopes and enthusiasm he had cherished and inflamed, and to attack the dominions of France. To this measure not only the nobles but the people were extremely averse. Several conspirators, some in order to re-establish the authority of the senate, others to avenge slight personal injuries, resolved to kill him at a masked ball. One of them, named Lilian-Horn, stung

stung by remorse, wished to save the king's life, without betraying his accomplices. He, therefore, sent a note to the monarch containing the following words: "I am yet your friend, though "I have reason to be no longer so. Do not go "to the ball to-night; for a plot is formed against "your life." Gustavus, on reading the note, was observed to turn pale; but he affected to consider it as intended to insult his courage, in order to deter him from the evening's amusement. To a nobleman, who urged him to abstain from going to the ball, or at least to secure himself with a coat of mail, he said with a smile, "Let "us go and see whether they will dare to assas- "sinate me."

This ball was given on the 16th of March. A. D. On entering the room, the king mingled 1792. among the crowd, and was surrounded by several persons in masks, one of whom fired a pistol at him, and lodged the contents in his body. A scene of dreadful confusion immediately ensued. The conspirators, amidst the general tumult and alarm, retired to the other parts of the room; but one of them had previously dropped his pistols and a dagger close by the wounded king. By the information of a cutler and a gunsmith, these weapons were found to belong to a nobleman, called Ankerstroem, a captain in the army, who was no sooner apprehended than he confessed that he was the person "who had endeavoured to liberate his country "by the death of a monster and a tyrant." He named two conspirators, who were capitally condemned; but, either from clemency, or policy, their punishment was commuted into exile. Ankerstroem was sentenced to have his right hand

and

and his head cut off, and his body impaled; and this sentence was carried into execution on the 17th of May. The king's wounds proved mortal; but he lived several days, and displayed in his misfortune a constant courage and an heroic firmness. Thus fell in his forty-sixth year Gustavus III. a prince who, from his active ambition, his eloquence, his courageous actions, his rash valour, his numerous defects, and his brilliant qualities, deserves a distinguished place in history.

Immediately on the death of the late monarch, his son Gustavus IV. was proclaimed king of Sweden; and his uncle, the duke of Sudermania, was appointed sole regent, till he should attain the age of eighteen years. The mild and equal conduct of the regent preserved the country from the horrors of internal war; while the wisdom, spirit, and patriotism of his councils saved it from the insidious attacks of a restless and dangerous neighbour. His prudence feelingly impressed him with the blessings of peace; and he dedicated his whole attention to repairing the losses which Sweden had suffered. At the conclusion of the year 1793, a conspiracy was discovered, at the head of which was baron Armfeldt, and others of the nobility, who confessed that application had been made to the empress of Russia to favour a revolution, by sending a fleet to cruize near Stockholm. The chief of the conspirators were sentenced to suffer perpetual imprisonment.

A. D. 1796. The young king, with his uncle and a numerous suite, being invited by the empress of Russia to visit Petersburg, set out for that city, where they arrived on

on the 25th of August. At the first interview of Gustavus and Catharine, he would have kissed her hand; but she refused to allow it, saying, "No, I cannot forget that the count von Haga "is a king."—"If your majesty," answered he, "will not give me leave as empress, at least permit this favour as a lady to whom I owe so "much respect and admiration." But the interview of the Swedish monarch with the young grand-duchess, Alexandra Paulina, to espouse whom this visit was wholly intended, was still more interesting. Her tall and elegant figure, fair complexion, light flaxen hair, waving in ringlets on her shoulders, regular features, and modest aspect, made a lively impression on his heart; which her innocence, candour, sensibility, and talents, contributed to strengthen. The princess of Mecklenburg, whom he was to have married, was soon forgotten; and the young Gustavus seemed enamoured of Alexandra.

The day for their espousals being fixed, the only difficulty that presented itself was that of religion. Catharine resolved to make a queen of Sweden of the Greek church. The day arrived for the public betrothment of the enamoured pair. The young princess, in her bridal attire, the empress and her court were already assembled; and the bridegroom only was absent, whose tardiness was a matter of surprize. The contract and articles of alliance had been carried to Gustavus only an hour before that appointed for the solemnity. He declared, however, that, though no restraint should be imposed on the conscience of the princess, she ought outwardly to conform to the established laws of Sweden. The conflict was severe; the

moment critical; but the principles of the youthful monarch triumphed over his passions. The importunities of the Russian ministers, the solicitation of the Swedes gained over to the cause, and even the interference of the regent, could not shake his resolution!—"No, no; I will not; I cannot; I will never sign them," exclaimed he; and, vexed at their pertinacity, hastened from them, and shut himself up in his apartment. Catharine was extremely chagrined at the disappointment; and Gustavus soon after quitted Petersburg.

A.D. 1801. When the armed neutrality was revived by the late emperor, Paul, Sweden joined the other northern powers, and made preparations for attacking England. But when the English armament, under the command of admirals Parker and Nelson, had defeated the Danish fleet before Copenhagen, and was proceeding against the Swedes, Alexander, who had ascended the throne of Russia, sent a note to the commander in chief, requesting a suspension of hostilities till a definitive arrangement could take place, which might terminate the differences that subsisted between Great Britain and the northern powers. Accordingly, England and Russia soon after concluded a treaty of agreement, to which Sweden acceded.

DENMARK.

DENMARK.

CHAP. I.

Description of Denmark and its History to the Accession of Canute VI.

TO Denmark, which consists of several islands in the Baltic sea and a peninsula adjoining to Germany, are added the kingdom of Norway and the great isle of Iceland. It is bounded on the west by the German ocean; on the east by Sweden and Swedish Lapland; on the north by the sea called the Categat; and on the south by Germany.

The air of Norway is in general pure and salubrious; and it is said that some of the natives live to so great an age, that existence is no longer considered as a blessing. The climate varies according to its proximity to the sea and northern situation. The eastern parts of Norway are generally covered with snow; and during the winter season, which continues six months or upwards, the largest rivers are arrested in their course by the frost; and the saliva no sooner drops from the mouth than it rolls on the ground like hail. But, against the intensity of the cold, the wise and bountiful Creator of the universe has bestowed, on the inhabitants of this inhospitable climate, a greater variety of preservatives than most other countries afford. They are supplied with fuel by extensive forests; clothes and coverings for their beds are furnished them by the wool of their sheep and

the furs of their wild beasts; down and feathers are afforded them by innumerable flights of birds; and they are ever sheltered from the inclemency of the wind by the mountains, which abound in caverns. At Bergen, the capital of Norway, the longest day consists of about nineteen hours, and the shortest of little more than five. During a part of the summer season, the inhabitants can read, write, and transact any business throughout the whole night; and, in the most northern provinces, the solar orb is perpetually in view. In those regions, however, in the middle of winter, there is only a feeble glimmering of light at noon, during an hour, when the rays of the sun reflect upon the tops of the mountains. In this gloomy season, however, the sky is so serene, and the moon and aurora-borealis are so bright, that the Norwegians carry on their fisheries and other trades without the assistance of any other light.

The mountains of Norway are covered with eternal snow; and the shores are in general steep and rocky, but abound in gulphs, creeks, and harbours, in many of which vessels may ride at anchor without the least danger. The Norwegian seas are celebrated for the variety and peculiarity of their fish, and also produce creatures whose existence has been for ages deemed chimerical. A sea-snake, or serpent of the ocean, was shot in 1756 by a master of a ship, who says that its head resembled that of a horse, that its mouth and eyes were large and black, and that from its neck hung a white mane. It floated on the surface of the water, and carried its head a considerable way out of the sea. The length of this creature was upwards of one hundred

dred yards. Here also are whales of various kinds, porpoises, sword-fish, sharks, sturgeon, salmon, turbot, cod, thornback, rock-fish, flying-fish, whitings, carp, gurnet, flounders, mackarel, and many others common to the European coasts. We are informed by a very respectable writer, whose veracity is indisputable, that in 1734, above the surface of the sea appeared a very large and frightful monster, the head of which overtopped the main-mast of a ship that was passing by; that it had a long and sharp snout, broad paws, and spouted water like a whale; and that its body was as thick as a hogshead, and its skin variegated like a tortoise-shell.

Near the isle of Moskoe is a singular kind of current, or whirlpool, the roaring of which is scarcely equalled by the loudest and most dreadful cataracts, and is heard at the distance of many leagues. During a quarter of an hour, between high and low water, the violence of this whirlpool is very considerably abated, and fishermen venture upon it with their boats: the impetuosity of the current, soon returns, and gradually increases, till it forms a vortex, which absorbs every thing that comes within its attraction. It is not in the power of imagination to conceive a fate more dreadful and terrifying than when a person feels himself irresistibly drawn to the verge of a whirlpool, which is ready to devour him; and even whales, when they find themselves overpowered by its violence, send forth the most lamentable howlings. A storm greatly heightens the fury of the stream, whose attraction will then extend farther than six English miles; and several ves-

sels have been engulphed in this vortex, when the unhappy crew considered themselves far distant from the reach of its force.

Greenland, which is a kind of appendage to the Danish crown, was discovered in 1585, by Captain Davis, an Englishman; from whom the straits which divide North America from Greenland, received their denomination. The summer season continues about three months, during which the sun shines bright and warm, and the sky is seldom shaded with a cloud: but, in winter, the Greenlanders during several melancholy months never see the sun, and have only morning and evening twilight to relieve the tedious gloom; and the brumal cold is so intense that the strongest spirits will freeze close by the fire. The seas of Greenland are extremely prolific in fish of almost every species, particularly whales, which swim in large shoals. When the Greenlanders have found a whale, they strike him with a harpoon fastened to a line made of seal-skin. When he is quite worn out by loss of blood, and it is no longer dangerous to approach him, they pierce him with spears and lances, and leaping into the sea cut away the fat all round the body. Nothing can be more singular than the ideas they have formed respecting the celestial bodies. The moon, they say, was once a young man, and the sun a young woman, his sister, with whom he was familiar in the dark; but the lady being desirous of knowing her paramour, rubbed her hands with soot, with which she stained his white bear-skin coat, and from this circumstance they account for the lunar spots. In order to avoid the incestuous embraces of her brother, the sun ascended the air, whither

ther the moon followed, and though he continues to pursue, he is never able to overtake her. They also believe, that the heavens revolve round the point of a prodigious rock, behind which the sun, moon, and stars retire, when invisible.

The isle of Iceland, which also depends on the crown of Denmark, derives its appellation from the immense masses of ice, that float around it, and is situated between 63 and 67 degrees of north latitude, and between 11 and 27 degrees of west longitude; being four hundred miles in length, and one hundred and sixty in breadth. The number of its inhabitants, which has been estimated at sixty thousand, is certainly disproportioned to the extent of the territory. Indeed, so great has been the malignancy of the pestilence, and other contagious disorders, that this island has been repeatedly almost depopulated. The small-pox, in particular, has at different times proved remarkably fatal to it; and in 1707 and 1708, sixteen thousand persons died of that loathsome distemper. Though the Icelanders are not remarkable for their strength, they are about the middle size, and are well proportioned. They are generally considered as an honest, faithful, and obliging race of people; extremely hospitable, and tolerably industrious. Their principal avocations are fishing and breeding of cattle; and they are remarkably attached to their native country, and think themselves the happiest people on earth.

The language of Iceland is the same as that formerly used in Norway, Sweden, and Denmark; and it has descended in such purity, from one generation to another, that the Icelanders can

can explain their most ancient traditional histories. Though it cannot be supposed that learning has made any considerable progress in this inhospitable clime, the natives of this island boast of their poets, historians, and divines; and one hundred and sixty-two Icelandic manuscripts were presented to the British Museum by Sir Joseph Banks, who, with some other learned and ingenious men, visited this country in 1772.

The northern situation of this island might naturally be supposed to exempt it from volcanoes and earthquakes, which frequently happen in those of warmer climates. In the years 1754, 1752, and 1755, however, Iceland suffered so much from these awful visitations, that the whole country was almost desolated. The principal vent of volcanic fires is mount Hecla, from whose summit eruptions at different times have occasioned terrible devastations; the ashes having been thrown to the distance of one hundred and eighty English miles. But, among all the natural curiosities with which this island abounds, none are more worthy of attention than the hot spouting water-springs. Geyser, which is the largest in Iceland, is situated at the distance of about two days' journey from Hecla. On approaching towards it, a tremendous noise is heard, like the rushing of a torrent precipitating itself from some stupendous height. After certain intervals, the water issues from this spring several times in one day; and, according to some travellers, it rises to the height of sixty fathoms. Certain, it is that it is thrown up much higher at some times than at others,

others, and its elevation is seldom less than ninety feet.

Copenhagen, which is the capital of Denmark, stands on an island surrounded by the waters of the Sound, the most celebrated strait in Europe, through which from five to six thousand ships annually pass and repass between the Ocean and the Baltic. The customs paid by these vessels, furnish one of the principal sources of revenue to the king of Denmark. Though the soil of this country is not fertile, it supplies the inhabitants with a sufficiency of the necessaries of life.

The Danes are in general tall and well-proportioned: their features are regular, their complexions florid, and their hair inclines to yellow or red. In their dispositions they are said to be a brave, courteous, and humane people. The more opulent possess abundance of spirit and vivacity, and are naturally fond of magnificence and ostentation. Their taste, however, for gaiety, dress, and expensive entertainments, met with a seasonable and laudable check from the present monarch, who published a sumptuary edict, which regulated the minutiæ of expence by the strictest economy and the wisest policy. During summer, both sexes adopt the French mode of dressing; but like other natives of the Hyperborean regions, they are obliged to have recourse to their furs and woollen garments in winter. A neatness of dress is also visible in the peasants, who are distinguished for a delicacy of manners, which in too many countries is not met with among the vulgar. In short, the Danes are said to be good soldiers, good subjects, good fathers, masters, and neighbours.

Marriages

Marriages are often contracted several years before they are consummated. The rites of sepulture are performed by the nobility with the most splendid parade; and the corpse of a person of quality is sometimes kept uninterred for several years, till the funeral can be celebrated with sufficient ostentation. In Copenhagen, the lowest mechanic is allowed to wear a sword; which is assumed by the most indigent plebeians, as a badge of gentility. In other parts of the kingdom, however, the superior classes only are permitted to exhibit this unnecessary appendage of dress.

When Luther contended for the doctrines of the Gospel, his tenets were favourably received in this country; and by a formal decree Lutheranism was declared the established religion. Other sects, are not therefore interrupted in the exercise of their particular modes of devotion; and in Denmark there is as great a variety of seceders, from the national church, as in most countries of Europe.

The government of this country was formerly one of the most free in the universe; and Denmark was governed by a king, to whose elevation the meanest subject had a right to contribute his vote. The dignity of the king, indeed, gave him pre-eminence in the field, and in the courts of justice: but no revenues were annexed to his title; and, unless he possessed sufficient property of his own, he was under the necessity of living in the stile of a private gentleman. The government, notwithstanding, terminated in an absolute monarchy; as will be seen in the subsequent parts of this history.

Historians

Historians agree that Dan, a native of Zealand, was the founder and first sovereign of this kingdom, which from him received the name of Denmark. His courage and skill in the art of war raised him to the throne, and induced the people to chuse him for their king. He reigned forty years with the greatest justice and reputation, and died universally lamented by his subjects. B. C. 1038.

Dan was succeeded by his eldest son, Humble; who was elected by the unanimous voice of the people. His reign was unfortunate and of short duration; and he was deposed by his brother, and reduced to a private station. B. C. 998.

Lother usurped the crown of his brother, and governed the Danes with the utmost rigour and severity. His cruelties at length rendered him intolerable to a people, whose spirit was not yet extinguished by oppression; and who, having expelled him from the throne, conferred the crown on his son Skioldo. At a period when corporeal strength was a powerful recommendation, this prince gained renown by killing an enormous boar, and triumphing over two famous wrestlers. He applied himself to the arts of peace, rewarded virtue, punished vice, and encouraged industry. His people were so sensible of the blessings they enjoyed, during his reign, that the appellation of Skioldo afterwards became in Denmark a common surname for good kings. B. C. 991. B. C. 966.

With the crown, Gram inherited the virtues of his father. His whole reign was a series of victories and conquests; but he was killed in battle by a king of Sweden. B. C. 888.

The

B. C. 856. The Swedish monarch, pursuing his success, united the crown of Denmark to those of Sweden and Norway. He was, however, at length induced to place Guthorm, the son of Gram, on the throne, on condition that he should pay a tribute to the crown of Sweden. The people were indignant at his meanness, and expressed such contempt for their unfortunate monarch that he died of chagrin.

B. C. 816. He was succeeded by the brave Hadding, who avenged the death of his father on the Swedish sovereign. Numerous are the exploits related of this prince. He was attended to the fields of war by Harpinga, a Danish lady, who participated his fatigues and hardships, conquered by his side, alleviated his distresses, and, at length, shared with him the throne of Denmark. On

B. C. 761. the death of Hadding, his son Frotho succeeded to the crown. He landed an army in England, and, by an ingenious stratagem, seized upon the capital, which was already denominated London. This expedition, like most of those that succeeded it, was probably undertaken from predatory motives alone; for Frotho returned to his native country with-

B. C. 685. out forming a settlement in Britain. He was succeeded by his eldest son Haldan, who endeavoured to render the crown secure by putting to death his two brothers. This prince left two sons, Roe and Helgo, of whom the former refused to sit on the throne, unless his brother was allowed to share it with him. Roe was a strict observer of justice, and the first of the Danish princes that reduced the customs of the people to a system of written laws.

Helgo

Helgo was a prince more addicted to war than his brother. He became enamoured of a girl of low birth and fortune, by whom he had a daughter, that afterwards became the mother of Rolfo, who succeeded his father in the kingdom; an act of incest that tarnishes the glory of his reign. Helgo, however, stung with remorse, killed himself in the anguish of regret. B. C. 595.

The virtues of Rolfo soon obliterated the memory of his disgraceful birth. The graces of his person equalled those of his mind; and his stature and strength were so extraordinary, that he was surnamed Rhrage: a Danish word expressive of these qualities. Historians bestow so great eulogiums on his valour, generosity, justice and munificence, and attribute to him so many virtues, that they seem to have borrowed the pencil of fancy. B. C. 566.

Rolfo leaving no issue, the states elected Hother, the grandson of Halding. This prince, in gratitude to the king of Norway, with whom he had resided previously to his accession to the throne, married that monarch's daughter. This marriage involved him in a quarrel with Balder, a northern prince, who had before paid his addresses to the fair Norwegian. Balder being defeated and slain in battle, his brother-in-law Bos challenged Hother to single combat, in which the Danish monarch lost his life. He was succeeded by his son Rorick, who was a just and warlike prince, jealous of the affections of his people, and of the honour of the nation. From this period to the Christian æra, the history of B. C. 483.

Denmark is confined to a meagre and uninteresting chronicle.

During the reign of Siwald III. the first emigration of the Danes to Germany took place. A great famine prevailing in the kingdom, it was proposed by Aggo and Ebbo, two noblemen, to put to death all the old men and children. Intelligence of this design being carried to Magga, the king's mother, she entered the council-chamber, and remonstrated against the barbarity of such an expedient. "It would better become," said she, "the piety and valour of the Danes to send "forth all their young men on foreign expedi-"tions, and thus leave to old age, innocence "and infirmity a greater share of the public "provisions." Her advice being adopted, it was agreed that every ninth man in Denmark and the provinces, able to carry arms, should compose the colony; that it should be conducted by Aggo and Ebbo; and that they should establish themselves on the coast of the Baltic, opposite to Denmark, between the Elbe and the Oder. Several other emigrations followed during the space of a thousand years.

A. D. 383.

Christianity was introduced into Denmark during the reign of Regner, the fifty-sixth king, who is supposed to have been contemporary with Louis the Debonnaire. Regner reconquered Denmark from Froe king of Sweden, who had also obtained possession of Norway.

In seizing on this latter kingdom, Froe had captured the wife and daughters of the king of Norway; and had exposed them, and all the virgins that had fallen into his hands, to the greatest indignities and insults. Lathgartha, a

young

young woman of an heroic disposition, having escaped from her chains, joined the army of Regner, broke through the ranks of the enemy, and attacked Froe, whom she struck dead at her feet.

This decisive action terminating the war, Regner was so captivated with the valour of the virgin that he married her. This marriage, however, was unfortunate: she was unjustly supposed to harbour designs against her husband, who divorced her. Soon after the Cimbri threw off the Danish yoke, and Regner found himself engaged in a dangerous and difficult war. Lathgartha, still faithful to her lover, equipped a fleet of one hundred and twenty ships, and hastened to his assistance. "If my "charms," said she to her astonished husband, "are faded in your eyes, it is requisite that I "should endeavour to compensate that loss by "other qualities more conducive to your glory, "and to the welfare of your kingdom." Whether this generous action gained for her a restoration to her former rank we are not informed.

Regner had a son basely assassinated. The misfortune threw the king into an agony of grief resembling furious phrenzy. Recovering from this paroxysm of madness, he raised an army against a monarch, styled king of the Hellespont, who was the author of the murder. He took him prisoner, but like a generous prince, he restored him to liberty: "Enjoy," said he, "that life which would only be an un-"worthy atonement to the manes of my son. "Let thy own conscience be thy tormentor." Regner defeated the Scots, subdued England,

and made himself master of Dublin, the capital of Ireland.

Eric, an usurper, who is nevertheless reckoned the sixtieth king, gave stability to Christianity: he abolished idolatry, and permitted all his subjects to embrace the gospel of Christ. He founded churches, and enriched them with liberal donations. Gormo, however, the sixty-fifth monarch, was an enemy of the Christians, whom he persecuted, demolishing their churches, and banishing their clergy. The emperor, Henry I. surnamed the Fowler, obliged him to repair those damages, and to recall the exiles. Harold VI. the son of Gormo, had the honour of conquering England, and was a just and pious monarch. During his reign the Christian religion flourished; and he caused his son, Swen, or Sheuon, to be baptized in that faith. Swen, however, excited by ambition and the intreaties of the Sambi and Cimbri, who were ready to revolt, took up arms against his father, and was crowned king at Weiburg. A war ensued: after a long and undecisive contest, the more moderate and prudent men of both parties proposed an accommodation, and the terms were accepted, when Harold was assassinated by a private soldier.

A. D. 858.

A. D. 940.

A. D. 981. Swen was no sooner seated on the throne, than, in gratitude to those persons who had hazarded their lives to procure him a crown, he ordered the pagan idols to be re-erected. He was taken prisoner by the Vandals, who restored him to liberty on his paying twice the weight, in pure gold, of his

his body drest in complete armour. To raise the amount of this ransom, the Danish ladies sold their jewels. After his return, he enacted some laws favourable to the women; and, among other things, ordained that they should inherit a third of all estates real and personal.

Swen marched against the Swedes, but was defeated in the first engagement, and obliged to leave his kingdom. He then wandered an exile into Norway, passed over into England, and was favourably received by the king of Scotland, who maintained him handsomely for the space of fourteen years. At length he was re-established on the throne of Denmark, through the mediation of the Scottish monarch, who exerted himself in behalf of the unfortunate king. Attributing his misfortunes to the apostacy of which he had been guilty, and to his banishing the clergy, and restricting the exercise of Christianity, he recalled the ecclesiastics, and repaired his error to the utmost of his power by publicly acknowledging it, and exhorting the Danes to return to that religion which his evil example had induced them to abandon. In his old age Swen covered himself with glory by annexing Norway to the crown of Denmark, and by the conquest of a part of England. A. D. 991.

Swen was succeeded by his son Harold, who was an effeminate, lewd, and profligate monarch, and whose contempt of virtue and morality rendered him so odious to a people always brave, and now civilized by the system of ethics which had been introduced among them, that he enjoyed his dignity only a short time.

A. D. 1015. He was deposed with every mark of infamy and disgrace, and his brother Canute, deservedly surnamed the Great, raised to the throne.

This prince commenced his reign with the invasion of England and Norway, both of which had thrown off the subjection which they had promised to his father Swen. The talents of Canute for the cabinet and the field were greatly superior to those of his father; and he was generally victorious. Finding the extent of his dominions, and the government of so many kingdoms, too great a burthen for one person, he resolved to divide the authority. Accordingly, to Hardi-Canute, his second son, he assigned Denmark; to Harold, the eldest, he gave England; and on Swen, the youngest, he bestowed Norway. Canute obtained the appellation of Hardi-Canute from the difficulties which he encountered, and the acts of bravery that he performed in Russia, whither his father sent him in pursuit of Olaus, king of Norway. He was succeeded in the kingdom by his brother Magnus, who was surnamed the Good, from his clemency to certain prisoners that he had taken in battle. His death was greatly and deservedly lamented by his subjects, who enjoyed under him all the happiness which a wise and prudent monarch is able to communicate to his people.

A. D. 1035.

A. D. 1041.

A. D. 1049. Swen II. the brother and the successor of Magnus, had five sons, who, by an agreement which he caused to be signed by the Danish nobles, and which is unparalleled

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in history, successively ascended the throne of Denmark. Their names were Harold the Simple; Canute the Pious, who might with equal justice have been denominated the chaste, the just, the friend of learned men; Olaus, surnamed the Famished, because, a great famine having prevailed in the kingdom, he died with grief arising from his inability to relieve the distresses of his people.

Eric, like his grandfather Magnus, was surnamed the Good, and was possessed of many amiable virtues. A musician, boasting to this prince of his skill on the harp, asserted that he could deprive his hearers of their understanding, and by the force of his harmony render them frantic. Eric, disbelieving the truth of this assertion, wished to make personal trial of his talents; and, in the paroxysm of phrenzy into which the performer threw him, killed four of his guards. Grieved at what he had done, the king made all possible recompense to the friends of the deceased, and, in order to do penance for this action, vowed to undertake a pilgrimage to the Holy Land. His subjects remonstrated against his design; but he set out on his journey, and died in the isle of Cyprus. When Eric departed for the Holy Land, he left his son Harold regent of the kingdom: but the states being informed of the death of their king, conformably to the promise they had made to Swen, recalled his son Nicolas, Eric's brother, who was a prisoner in Flanders, and on whom they conferred the crown. A. D. 1107.

This prince degenerated from the virtues of his ancestors, and involved himself and his people

people in a variety of misfortunes. The public tranquillity was first disturbed by Henry, prince of the Vandals, who made an irruption into Sleswick. Canute, son of the late king Eric, and nephew to Nicolas, perceiving the misery to which that duchy was reduced, requested the government of a country which had been refused by many of the nobility. Canute, having defeated the Vandals, concluded with them a treaty of pacification. This service, and the amiable qualities of the prince, endeared him to the Danes, who perceived a striking contrast between him and the haughty and indolent Nicolas.

But the enemies of Canute increased in number; and they persuaded Nicolas that ambition was the cause of all his actions, and that he aspired at the throne of Denmark. The king, therefore, intended to wait a favourable opportunity for privately destroying him. An accident added strength to the suggestions of Canute's enemies: Nicolas having paid a visit to Sleswick,[a] his nephew appeared on a throne equal to that of the monarch; and, though he apologised for his imprudence, his conduct, in that instance, left a sting in the breast of the uncle. Magnus, the son of Nicolas, availed himself of this state of things, and having allured Canute to court, a conspiracy was formed against him, in which the king himself was an accomplice; and the unfortunate prince fell a victim to premeditated treachery.

The news of Canute's death rendered the people inconsolable; and they poured out imprecations against his murderer. Canute had left a young wife; who, eight days after his decease,

decease, was delivered of a son, to whom was given the name of Waldemar. Harold and Eric, his uncles, were appointed his guardians, who exhibited their ward in the cradle, at an assembly held in the duchy of Sleswick. There they pathetically deplored the tragic death of Canute, recounted his excellent qualities, exposed to view his mantle stained with gore and pierced with poniards, and implored the vengeance of the people, and their protection of the infant son of the unfortunate prince. The populace were excited to insurrection by the pathetic scene, and demanded to be led against the barbarous and perfidious murderer; and Nicolas, in order to appease the tumult, was obliged to banish his son Magnus, with the most notorious of his accomplices.

But the king being persuaded soon after to recall his son, Eric and Harold immediately convened the people, who deprived Nicolas of the royalty, and declared Magnus unworthy of wearing the crown of Denmark. Eric having raised an army, marched against the king, who had nearly fallen into his hands. Several successive engagements took place, in one of which Magnus was slain. Eric, seeing that the king had no heir, and, being himself a descendent of Eric III. disregarding the rights of his pupil Waldemar, or under pretence of better defending them, assumed the regal dignity. Nicolas, incensed at his audacity, presented his sceptre to Eric's brother Harold, whom he declared his heir. His next step was to go in person to Sleswick, where the name of Canute was remembered with affection by the inhabitants, whom he hoped to conciliate. No sooner, however,

ever, had Nicolas entered the city, than the gates were closed, and he was killed in the midst of his guards.

A. D. 1128. Harold being informed of the king's death, and of Eric's approach, was greatly perplexed how to act. He fled, however, to the king of Norway, who assisted him with a strong body of troops. On this intelligence, Eric caused five of Harold's six sons to be put to death; and the youngest, whose name was Olaus, made his escape in the dress of a peasant. Harold himself fell a victim to the perfidious schemes of his brother, who procured his assassination. Eric encouraged a revolt against the king of Norway, who, being delivered into his hands by the insurgents, was not only confined in a prison, but deprived of his sight, and robbed of the marks of virility. The conduct of Eric excited a ferment in the nation, which was only allayed by the death of the tyrant, who was poniarded in the tribunal where he was administering justice.

The royal family being nearly extinct in the male line, great disputes arose in the diet about the succession. Some proposed Swen, the natural son of the late king; others supported the claim of Canute, the son of Magnus, who had been declared unworthy of the crown; whilst a third party espoused the cause of Waldemar, son of the beloved Canute. His mother Ingeburga presented her child to the assembly, who immediately and unanimously proclaimed him king: but she, aware of the dangers to which her son would be exposed by this exaltation, refused to accept the diadem for her son, unless on condition that a guardian should be appointed for

for him, and that the guardian should enjoy the sovereign authority. Eric, surnamed the Lamb, from the mildness of his disposition, was therefore chosen regent, or rather colleague to Waldemar, and sole sovereign during the young prince's minority.

Eric V. had scarcely ascended the throne, when Olaus, Harold's son, who had escaped the massacre in which his brothers perished, returned from Sweden, and demanded his father's estate, which had been confiscated. But the king refusing to comply, Olaus had recourse to plots and conspiracies, and attempted to assassinate Eric in his bed-chamber. Being, however, prevented by the guards, he fled a second time into Sweden, where he assumed the regal title, and returned into Denmark with a powerful army. He was at length defeated and slain. Eric afterwards fell into an inactivity and indolence, which injured his reputation. A. D. 1139.

On his death, Swen, the illegitimate offspring of Eric IV. and Canute the son of the proscribed Magnus, contended with Waldemar for the sovereignty. These two rivals, however, fought more violently against each other, and the advantages seemed in favour of Swen. Waldemar, who was now of age, declared also against Canute, and accepted from Swen the government of Sleswick, which had formerly belonged to his father. Canute requested the assistance of the emperor Frederic Barbarossa, whom he promised to hold Denmark as a fief of the empire. Barbarossa, therefore, cited Swen to appear before him; but that prince refused to obey the injunctions A. D. 1148.

injunction of the emperor. The Saxons and Vandals, whose interference had also been invited, gave more decisive judgments at the point of the sword.

During the greatest part of this contest, which continued for nine years, Waldemar, who did not feel himself possessed of superior strength, regulated his conduct by the train of circumstances; sometimes espousing the cause of the one, and sometimes of the other competitor. At length they seemed to have compromised their differences, and it was agreed, that Swen should enjoy the title and authority of king; that Jutland should be the property of Waldemar; and that Zealand, Funen, and the neighbouring islands, should form the dominions of Canute. Swen, however, soon shewed his dislike to this partition, and employed ruffians to assassinate his colleagues. Canute fell by their hands; but Waldemar escaped, and, leading an army against the perfidious monarch, defeated his troops, and killed him.

A. D. 1157. Waldemar now ascended the throne of Denmark, and commenced his reign by several acts of clemency: he punished only those who had committed actions worthy of death. He blamed no man for acting according to inclination and principle; and it was vice only that felt his displeasure. He had been educated in common with other youths of his own age, whose merit he was able to appreciate. His friend and fellow-student Absalon was raised to an exalted rank in the church; and the prelate ever continued to act as his first and principal minister. By that common education Waldemar had also acquired the habit

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of living without pride, among men subject to his command, and of treating with them on business. This circumstance gave him considerable influence in the senate; for at this period Denmark had a senate, which in all probability was composed of the principal nobles of the kingdom. Moreover, the troubles in which Waldemar had been involved from the time of his birth, the hostilities and negociations in which he had been engaged, had rendered him, even in early youth, both a brave warrior and a skilful politician. When he ascended the throne, he carried with him those qualifications, and gave proofs of his military talents in conducting operations against the Vandals, who had issued from Jutland, and infested the Danish coasts. His abilities for governing were equally exhibited in the laws which he enacted for his kingdom, and in the negociations he carried on with foreign nations.

Waldemar attacking the Vandals, reduced them to great extremity, and, having killed their king in a general engagement, they were obliged to sue for peace. During the contest between Alexander and Victor, relative to the papal dignity, the latter, with the approbation of Waldemar, appointed a prelate to the bishopric of Sleswick. This promotion being disagreeable to one of the archbishops, he espoused the cause of Alexander, and declared the election void. The king, thereupon, deprived the archbishop of his castles and his treasures, and diminished the power of the clergy. A. D. 1162.

Whilst thus employed, embassadors arrived from Norway, informing Waldemar that they had deposed their monarch, A. D. 1163.

that the Norwegians tendered him their crown. This offer he accepted, and made for the dispossessed sovereign a provision, with which the latter was well satisfied. The Danes, pleased with his virtues, voluntarily proposed to associate with him in the kingdom his son Canute, who was then only four years of age.

The general affection of the people, however, did not prevent some private discontents. Two conspiracies were formed against Waldemar; but he prevented both from being carried into effect. The king falling sick, was prevailed on by his nobility to call in the assistance of a certain abbot, an empiric, whose impudence and boasting had raised him to a high degree of reputation. He administered the drug to the monarch, who breathed his last while left alone to take that repose, which the quack affirmed would restore him to health. Thus died Waldemar, a prince more respected than any of his predecessors, for the qualities of his mind and person. His piety, justice, prudence, clemency, and bravery, rendered him the delight of his people, and the admiration of surrounding nations. His talents equally suited war and peace; but his treatment of the conquered added more to his fame than all his great achievements.

CHAP. II.

From the Accession of Canute VI. to that of the now reigning Family of Oldenburg.

A. D. 1183. AS soon as the remains of Waldemar were honourably interred, Canute VI. his son and successor, repaired to Jutland,

Jutland, where he convened the states, in order to redress those grievances which had occasioned the late tumults. During the life of his father, he had been declared immediate heir to the throne, with all the solemnities of a coronation; and, therefore, assumed the insignia and prerogatives of royalty without form or ceremony. But the malcontents elected Harold their general, who took the title of king, and set up his standard, to which crouds of peasants immediately repaired. He was, however, soon after defeated; and the rebels were dispersed.

Canute had been intrusted by his father with some military operations, which he performed with much credit. When he was elevated to the regal dignity, he resigned the honours and fatigues of war to his brother Waldemar, and reserved to himself those of a just and moderate government. During his reign, a general synod of the clergy was convoked, which gave a uniform liturgy to the whole kingdom. He died of a disease which terminated his existence in a few days. He is celebrated as a prince of great piety and moderation, and enacted some wholesome and necessary laws. With respect to murder, he ordained that only the personal effects of the guilty person should be confiscated, and that the real estate should descend to his heirs and relations.

On the death of Canute, Waldemar II. his brother, was invested with the insignia of regal authority, and unanimously chosen to succeed to the throne of Denmark. His military exploits had gained him great reputation, and augmented the wealth and power of his country: and his private conduct had A. D. 1203.

secured to him the esteem and affections of all to whom he was personally known. He fortified his frontiers, enlarged Hamburgh, and erected a large bridge over the Elbe. He repaired Lubec, which had been destroyed by a conflagration, built the city of Stralsund, subjugated Pomerania, invaded Lower Saxony and Livonia with success, defeated the Russians, and penetrated into their country. The successful issue of these expeditions obtained him the surname of the Victorious. He reduced to order the finances, which had been hitherto neglected. By an estimate of the revenue at that time, it appears that Denmark was capable of supporting a fleet of fourteen hundred ships of war, great and small, and of furnishing the pay of one hundred and sixty-nine thousand four hundred fighting men.

In the midst of this opulence and greatness, Waldemar experienced a humiliating reverse. Henry count palatine, who had been at war with the king, desirous of effecting a reconciliation, had a personal interview with Waldemar. The latter, however, dictating terms which appeared hard and unreasonable, Henry surprized the king in a party of pleasure near the sea-side, hurried him on board a vessel; and, on his arrival in Germany, confined him in the castle of Daneberg. Here Waldemar continued for three years: nor was it till after repeated intreaties, together with the payment of heavy sums, and the cession of large tracts of territory, which he had previously conquered, that he regained his liberty. He returned to Denmark indignant at the treatment he had received, but more than ever beloved by his subjects.

This

This monarch regulated the succession among his sons. Eric, the eldest, was appointed heir of the crown of Denmark; Abel, the second, was created duke of Southern Jutland; and Christopher, the third, held Bleking. Waldemar convened a general diet, in which were defined the rights of the people and the prerogatives of the prince, and likewise all cases criminal, civil, and ecclesiastical. At this epoch originated the constitution which subsisted till the revolution in 1665. Waldemar died full of years and of glory, and left his people a prey to the ambitious and unnatural contentions of his children.

Eric V. assumed the throne of Denmark at the age of twenty-five, and his reign was agitated by disturbances which terminated only with his death. Abel and Christopher aiming at independency, Eric endeavoured to reduce them to subjection, which produced incessant wars between the brothers. Abel, however, treated Eric with greater deference than Christopher; but he only employed it as a cloak, the better to conceal his ambition, of which he soon gave his unfortunate brother a cruel proof. A. D. 1240.

Eric paid a visit to Abel, in order to engage him to act as mediator between himself and the princes of Holstein, with whom he was at war. The king was well received, and Abel promised that his endeavours should not be wanting to effect a reconciliation; but he caused Eric to be seized and carried off in a boat; and, when at a distance from the shore, stabbed him, and threw his body into the sea. Abel endeavoured to conceal the crime by circulating a report that

the king's death had been occasioned by a quarrel among the sailors; but the tale obtained no credit. The states assembled for electing a new monarch, and as it was difficult in the present situation of affairs to appoint any other successor than Abel, who was too powerful to suffer the elevation of a rival, they conferred on him the crown, after exacting from him an oath that he had not been accessary to the death of his brother.

A. D. 1250.

Abel had not long enjoyed the diadem before his conscience tormented him. In examining the papers of Eric, he found that the deceased prince had formed the resolution of abdicating the throne, and retiring to a monastery; and that he had appointed him his successor, and destined for him a particular legacy, as a token of his sincere affection. This discovery harrowed his very soul. He was slain by a body of insurgents, who attacked the king in his camp; and, after an obstinate engagement, defeated his army. It must be acknowledged that Abel was brave, and possessed many other excellent qualities: but ambition was his ruling passion, which induced him to commit the horrible crime of fratricide, that stained his memory, and made him detested by all who had any sense of honour, humanity, and truth.

The brand of reprobation which his subjects had been unable to fix upon Abel during his life, was stamped upon his son Waldemar, whom the states rejected as the dangerous fruit of a venomous stock: they placed upon the throne his uncle Christopher, third son of Waldemar II. Christopher I. contended with his neighbours in wars, which he terminated

A. D. 1252.

terminated with happy success, and engaged in quarrels with the clergy of his kingdom, which caused him much uneasiness. His death was sudden, and was supposed to have been occasioned by poison, or some other unnatural cause.

On the death of Christopher, his eldest son, Eric VII. who was then a minor, was raised to the throne under the regency of his mother Margaret, a woman of prudence, virtue, and piety. The guardian and the ward, however, experienced opposition from the nobles and the clergy, who compelled them to seek refuge in Fionia, a distant province of the kingdom. After their return, they engaged in war with the princes of Holstein; who, attacking Margaret and her son with a powerful army, defeated them, and made them prisoners. The policy of the queen regent, however, rendered her confinement of short duration; and, having obtained her liberty, she soon after procured the release of the king. All ranks of people lamented the death of Margaret, who, with great discretion and policy, for twenty-three years governed the kingdom as the counsellor and minister of the king, and, under her advice, public affairs prospered. On the decease of this princess, many enemies, whom her prudence had suppressed, appeared against Eric; who, loading the people with taxes, and abandoning himself to debauchery, disgusted the clergy and nobles, and was assassinated in the flower of his age. A. D. 1259.

Eric VIII. surnamed the pious, succeeded to the crown of his father, the late king. Being a minor, his mother and the senate governed the kingdom; and a person A. D. 1286.

person of the name of Waldemar of Sleswick was appointed his guardian. This *pious* monarch, having imprisoned some of the clergy who had conspired against the late king, was excommunicated by the pope! His misfortunes were extremely great. He suffered reverses in the wars undertaken against his neighbours; and he had frequent disputes with his brother Christopher, which were brought before the states. He had fourteen children, but they all died during his life. This prince is celebrated for his piety, sound policy, and justice. None of the wars in which he was engaged were so important as to gain him the reputation of a great warrior; but he did not appear to want valour and military talents.

A. D. 1320. On the death of Eric VIII. his brother, Christopher II. supplicated the nobility, clergy, and populace, for their interest, and distributed his presents with such liberality that he was elected king, and was the first sovereign of Denmark, mentioned in history, who obtained the crown by means of bribery and corruption. He was, however, obliged to swear to articles which materially restricted the regal authority; and he subscribed to every condition required.

A. D. 1322. Being firmly seated on the throne, he convoked a diet to determine the succession, and had interest sufficient to procure his son, Eric IX. to be declared presumptive heir of the crown, and his associate in the government. Having now obtained his purpose, Christopher disregarded the solemn engagements entered into at his accession. This proceeding inflamed the nobility, who flew to arms, and commenced

commenced hostilities against the king. Eric marched against the malcontents, who surrounded him, and made him and his whole army prisoners of war. Christopher finding himself unable to contend with his subjects, packed up his treasures, and fled into Germany.

The nobility, and principal persons concerned in the league against him, resolving to cut off from the fugitive all hope of the crown in case he should return, and having obtained the consent of the people, publicly raised Waldemar, duke of Sleswick, to the throne. A. D. 1526. Christopher, however, did not despair: he made application to the marquis of Brandenburg, who had married his daughter, and who pleaded his cause before the emperor. He dispersed declarations through every part of Denmark, promising to redress all grievances, and not to undertake any public affair without previously consulting and obtaining the consent of a general diet. He contrived also to gain possession of the principal towns, and ravaged the open country.

Waldemar was only twelve years of age, and was under the tutelage of his uncle Gerhard. The Danes were become weary of their new government: they saw that all places of profit and trust were possessed by Germans, and experienced all the inconvenience and oppression, in the minority of Waldemar, which they dreaded from Christopher. They reflected that it was more advantageous for them to obey an experienced king, and his son who had attained the age of manhood, than a child and his guardian. These sentiments operated on the minds of the Danes, and they released Eric from his confinement,

A. D. 1329. ment, and re-established Christopher on the throne, under conditions, indeed, more rigid than the former, but which he accepted in the same manner. At the same time also, Waldemar renounced the sovereignty, and retired to his duchy of Sleswick. Christopher was again regardless of his promises; and, being attacked by the nobles, was made prisoner, and died soon after, A. D. 1333.

Eric had fallen in battle; but Christopher left two sons, Waldemar and Otho; the former of whom was at the court of Brandenburg, and the other had scarcely passed the age of childhood. Upon the death of the late king, an interregnum for seven years ensued, which was occasioned by the treacherous conduct of Gerhard; who, under pretence of aiding his ward, Waldemar, to remount the throne, laboured for his own interest.

Nicholas Norevi, a man universally esteemed for his public spirit, his courage, prudence, and learning, beheld with sorrow the condition of Denmark; and, resolving to endeavour to restore tranquillity to his country, killed Gerhard in his tent in the midst of his army, and made his escape. Henry, the son of Gerhard, immediately renounced the claims of his father, and fled into Wolstein. Waldemar of Sleswick withdrew all pretensions to the crown, in consideration of a sum of money, a grant of lands, and the marriage of his sister with Chrisopher's eldest son Waldemar. This prince provided liberally for his younger brother Otho, and was elected king of Denmark.

Waldemar.

Waldemar III. being raised to the throne, obtained the surname of Atterdag, which in the Danish language signifies "time to spare," because he was never in a hurry, and yet was not the less successful. The first act of his reign was employed in restoring and confirming to the nobility, clergy, and people, the entire possession of all their rights, privileges, and immunities, which had been greatly retrenched during the interregnum. He also passed an act of oblivion, which obliterated the remembrance of such actions as might disturb the public tranquillity. He entertained thoughts of reclaiming the crown-lands, which had been alienated during the late troubles, and of reducing under his dominion the provinces that had been seized on by the princes of Holstein. To effect his purpose, the clergy granted him a silver cup from each church. A. D. 1340.

But, instead of executing these projects, Waldemar made professions of a piety more rigorous and severe than prudence or policy dictated. While his dominions were pledged to strangers, nothing could be more unseasonable than expeditions against the infidels, and holy pilgrimages, which were the effects of blind zeal and pious phrensy. He projected crusades against the Prussians, who were pagans, and allied himself with the Teutonic knights against those idolaters. He made an expedition to the Holy Land, visited Jerusalem, and entered himself into the fraternity of the Knights Templars. After his return to Denmark, he took an active part in the affairs of Germany, but his success was not commensurate with his wishes.

Waldemar was a whimsical compound of libertinism

tinism and bigotry; of sobriety and intemperance. His passion for the female sex was excessive; and to his inconstancy and fondness of variety, Denmark, Sweden, and Norway were indebted for their greatest princess. Having on ill-grounded suspicions imprisoned his queen, the design of passing a night with one of her ladies conducted him to the place of her confinement; but the lady, faithful to her mistress, put her into the arms of her husband, without his perceiving the trick. Thus Love gave to Hymen the celebrated Margaret, who became queen of Denmark, Norway, and Sweden.

This prince was almost always engaged in hostilities, and some successes gained him the reputation of a great man: but some of his actions appear to be the effects of insanity. A formidable league being formed against him between the neighbouring princes and the Danish nobles, his courage and presence of mind forsook him; and, instead of preparing for defence, he publicly announced that he had made a vow of going to Rome. Accordingly he departed, and conferred on the senate full powers for concluding a treaty of peace, which they accomplished by dint of sacrifices and concessions. In the mean time the king resided at the emperor's court; and, as soon as apprised of the event, renounced his intended journey to Rome. But he sent an embassy to Gregory XI. and reqested him to interpose his authority in quieting the disturbances in his dominions. The pope, however, wrote to Waldemar, and exhorted him to change his turbulence into tranquillity, and to pursue more gentle measures with his subjects, threatening to excommunicate him,

if

if he disobeyed these injunctions. Waldemar was highly displeased with the admonitions of Gregory, and immediately wrote to him as follows: "I hold my life from God, my crown from my "subjects, and my faith from your predecessors; "and if you think the obligation too considerable, I return it to you by these presents."

As the king left no male issue, his daughter Margaret, the child of love, and the darling child of fortune, who had been married to the king of Norway, and was now a widow, had the address to procure her son, Olaus V. to be elected king of Denmark, in prejudice of her nephew, Albert, son of her elder sister Ingelburga, and nephew to the king of Sweden. Olaus being only eleven years of age at the time of his accession to the throne, Margaret was declared regent during his minority, and governed the two kingdoms of Norway and Denmark, as if she had been possessed of the sovereignty. On the death of Olaus, whose reign produced nothing worthy of narrating, Margaret was unanimously elected queen of Denmark, and received the crown from the clergy; and, at the same time, also was appointed to the sovereignty of Norway.

A. D. 1375.

A. D. 1387.

The people fearing that the succession might again become extinct, entreated the queen to enter into an advantageous marriage, which might likewise augment her power and dominions. But Margaret, jealous of her sovereign authority, could not think of dividing it with a husband, and received the proposal with coldness. In order, however, to satisfy the desire of her subjects, she consented to appoint a successor,

cessor; and selected a person so young that she had no reason to apprehend, during a long time to come, any necessity of defending her authority against him, if he aspired to a participation of it. She fixed the succession in the Mecklenburg family, which was nearly allied to her, and obliged the young prince to change his name from Henry to Eric, which was more agreeable to the ears of the Danes.

Albert, the nephew of Margaret, in virtue of the rights which he inherited from his mother, asserted his claim to the crown, and assumed the arms of Sweden, Denmark, and Norway. Indignant at not having been chosen to the succession, he spoke of Margaret in the most contemptuous and disrespectful terms; and mingled personal insults with the other matter of his manifestoes. His aunt depended much on the support of the clergy, and frequently admitted the visits of an abbot of Soora, who was her spiritual director. But that malignity, which is usual in courts, attributed to the abbot a very different employment about her majesty's person. Albert passed some jests on the subject, which piqued the queen, and induced her to make him repent his indiscretion.

Albert, elevated to the throne of Sweden, did not regulate his actions by the maxims of prudence: he disposed of all places of trust to foreigners; imposed taxes without consulting the senate; and, in a word, became extremely unpopular, and even odious to his subjects, by the pride and insolence with which he treated the Swedes. Margaret fomented these divisions, and rendered herself no less beloved in that kingdom than Albert was detested; and the Swedes had

had already determined to constitute her their sovereign. The Swedish malcontents, accordingly, secretly offered the crown to Margaret, who received the proposal with joy, and promised to defend the people in all their rights and privileges. The Swedish senate wrote to her soon after, and acknowledged her as queen of Sweden, Denmark, and Norway. Margaret marched an army to the assistance of the malcontents, and attacking Albert at Falkoping, a furious battle ensued, in which victory was for a long time doubtful, but which at length terminated in favour of the queen. The king, with his sons and principal partisans, fell into the hands of Margaret, who immured them in the fortresses of Denmark. She then advanced victoriously to Stockholm, and was received as sovereign of Sweden, A. D. 1389.

But, though the title was conferred on her by all orders of the state, it was not fully secured to her till confirmed in the celebrated assembly held at Calmar. The treaty there concluded was denominated the "Union of Calmar," which consisted of three principal articles, established for the security of each nation: 1st. "That the three kingdoms of Denmark, "Sweden, and Norway, should thenceforward "have but one king, who should be chosen "alternately by each of them, and approved "in a general assembly:—2d. That the monarch "should divide his residence equally between "the three kingdoms, and appropriate the re- "venues of each to its particular exigencies:— "3d. That each kingdom should retain its own "laws, customs, senate, and privileges, and "that the subjects of one should not be ele- A. D. 1397.

" vated to offices of profit or power in another." These conditions would appear at first sight to have been dictated by Wisdom herself; but experience, which stamps the seal of approbation on the resolutions of men, has proved the defects of this convention, which was the source of wars that continued to rage during a whole century between the three kingdoms.

While the congress was assembled at Calmar, Eric, the son of Albert, died in captivity; and this circumstance induced his father to relinquish all thoughts of remounting the throne, and of preserving a crown which he could not transmit to his posterity in a direct line. Margaret had previously granted her nephew his liberty; and he, therefore, now accepted the offers which she made to him to live in a private station. Her authority was now fully established; and she changed Eric's title of successor to that of king in conjunction with her, in the three kingdoms of Denmark, Sweden and Norway.

Margaret bestowed unremitting attention on the government of her three kingdoms, which she rendered alike flourishing and prosperous. By the useful regulations which she adopted, commerce, finance, army, marine, laws civil and criminal, and every branch of administration, was benefited. She has been denominated the Semiramis of the north by some historians, who consider that appellation as a doubtful acceptation, and which may as truly be construed into a satire as into an eulogium. If, say they, Margaret rivalled the oriental Semiramis in talents and power, she also imitated her in her attachment to favourites, and her indulgence to sensual pleasures. It is probable that there is much justice

justice in this remark! but great queens must expect to have their characters darkened by shades, which enable the eyes of jealousy to endure the splendour of their glory. And if Margaret was inferior to some, in the qualities of the heart, she was exceeded by none in prudence, justice, and true magnanimity; virtues which were distinguished in her at an early age, and which induced her father to say, "Nature "committed a mistake in making her a woman: "her first intention was to make her a man." She died in the fifty-ninth year of her age, and the thirty-sixth of her reign.

On the death of Margaret, Eric X. who was already joint possessor of the throne, became its sole occupant. No prince ever ascended the throne with greater applause and expectations from the people; and nothing would have seemed more impossible than that before his death he should descend it with equal disgrace. The Danes flattered themselves that they should experience in him those qualities which they had admired; but, with the dominions of Margaret, he possessed neither her ability nor prudence. Far from recovering their privileges, which had been retrenched by the late sovereign, the Swedes found the yoke of oppression rendered more grievous and burthensome. He did not, however, immediately suffer them to perceive the projects which he had formed against their liberties; but he insensibly glided as it were into measures of despotism and tyranny. With respect, however, to Norway, he all at once treated it as a petty kingdom, whose resentment was little to be dreaded. A. D. 1411.

The people complained of the extortions of

the governors whom the king had appointed, and who tyrannized over the people, and conducted themselves with great pride and insolence. The evil increased every day; new taxes were arbitrarily imposed, and rigidly exacted. The people carried their complaints to the throne; but were refused redress with marks of contempt, which a brave and warlike nation could not support. At length the king, afraid of the consequences of their disaffection to his government, promised to redress all their grievances. Eric shone to greater advantage in assemblies and diets, where nothing but words are requisite, than at the head of armies, where action is necessary. He never scrupled to promise and to retract his promise, to pledge and to violate his word. Those delusive hopes, with which the people are flattered, may sometimes lull them to sleep and repose; but truly dreadful is that nation, which awaketh from her slumbers.

The pride and conduct of the king plunged him into a tedious war with the princes of Holstein, which a variety of causes contributed to protract and render unsuccessful. The Danes and Swedes, alike disaffected with his indolence in the government, with his infatuated attachment to favourites, and his contemptuous disregard of their remonstrances, determined to renounce their allegiance to him, and to elect a new sovereign. During the time that this conspiracy was forming, Eric lived entirely at ease in the isle of Gothland, where he had constructed for himself a delightful abode, and paid no regard to the troubles and confusion in Denmark and Sweden. He did not even deign to assist at the diet, which was to decide his fate. This infatuation induced the Danish senate to send an embassy

to Christopher of Bavaria, to desire his acceptance of the crown, and to request that he would take immediate possession of the throne. At the same time they informed Eric, by letter, that they had renounced their allegiance to him, and had elected another king; who, they hoped, would be more mindful of his promises, and pay greater regard to the welfare and prosperity of the people.

Eric answered the senate by expressing his astonishment at their proceedings, in deposing him from his dignity, and in electing, without his knowledge, Christopher duke of Bavaria, king of Denmark. He also added remonstrances and menaces, which, being unsupported by power, were entirely disregarded. But he afterwards testified no other resentment at the indignity of being deposed, than by occasionally sending out corsairs, whom he had taken into his pay, and who pillaged the Danish and Swedish ships that passed in sight.

Christopher III. duke of Bavaria, being elected king in the room of the dethroned monarch, who was his uncle, took possession of the throne, was invested with the insignia of royalty, and received the oaths of his subjects. Immediately after his arrival in Denmark, the senate published a decree, which declared all those enemies to their country who should visit the court of Eric, or obey any other sovereign than Christopher. This was followed by a manifesto, containing articles of accusation against the dethroned monarch, and on which, it was said, was founded his deposition. It is probable that it seemed necessary for confirming the authority of Christopher, who, in other A. D. 1438.

respects,

respects, treated Eric with tenderness. Complaints being made to the former of the depredations and piracies committed by the latter, he treated them with raillery, and said he was glad that his uncle could devise any method of amusing and supporting himself. The evil, however, daily increasing, the people became more earnest, and obliged him to make formal preparations for war against Eric. Accordingly he made a descent with a body of troops into Gothland; but, while they were supposed to be engaged in hostile action, the nephew and uncle were agreeably passing their time in each other's company.

The dethroned monarch was allowed to enjoy, like Tiberius, a voluptuous life in his new Caprea; but which was exempt from the disorders attendant on the Roman. Christopher having married Dorothea, the daughter of the margrave of Brandenburg, the kingdom was filled with foreigners, and the Danes began to complain. The Bavarian instantly remembered the causes of Eric's deposition, and appeased his subjects. His whole time was occupied in the concerns of his people, in promoting and encouraging trade, and enforcing the laws of the kingdom. He sacrificed to his subjects some portions of his authority; and, therefore, the Danish writers represent him as a moderate, prudent, and patriotic prince. The Swedes, however, on the contrary, pourtray him under the features of a haughty despot, and a tyrant, probably because he did not observe toward them the same delicacy. It is, therefore, reasonable to conclude that, like many other princes, he possessed only those virtues as were promotive of his interest.

He

He left no issue, and died young of a short illness, which terminated his existence in a few days.

On the death of Christopher great contests arose concerning a successor to the crown, which the Danes felt an inclination to confer on his widow, Dorothy; but they dreaded her youth, and the choice she might make of a husband. She endeavoured to remove their apprehensions, by promising that she would accept of no husband, except from their hands. The states then offered the crown to Adolphus, duke of Holstein, who, with a moderation and disinterestedness almost uncommon among princes, consulting the good of his subjects, whose interest would have been absorbed in that of Denmark, refused to accept it.

They afterwards made application to the count of Oldenburg, who had a numerous progeny, and who answered them as follows:—"I have three sons, whose qualities are very different. One is passionately fond of women and pleasure; another breathes nought but war, without paying any regard to the justice of the cause; but the third is of a more moderate disposition, prefers peace to the glory of arms, and yet is unrivalled in valour, generosity, and magnanimity." These characters he pourtrayed for the information of the senate, and desired them to make choice of him who, they believed, would render the kingdom flourishing and prosperous. The senate immediately declared in favour of that prince whose panegyric the father had so warmly pronounced; and under whose happy auspices commenced the greatness

greatness of the house of Oldenburg, which at this day occupies the throne of Denmark.

CHAP. III.

From the Accession of the now reigning Family of Oldenburg to the present Time.

A. D. 1448. CHRISTIAN I. being thus elected sovereign, was soon after proclaimed king of Denmark and Norway, and crowned accordingly. The Swedes, however, not thinking themselves bound by the choice of the Danes to acknowledge him as their monarch, asserted that his election was an infraction of the union of Calmar, and bestowed the crown on their own countryman Charles Canutson. A war ensued between the two rivals, who filled both kingdoms with disturbances during the whole course of their joint lives; and, having mutually wrested the sceptre from each other's hands, abandoned and resumed it. These altercations cost the people of both countries very dear.

No sooner had Canutson obtained possession of the Swedish throne than he invaded the island of Gothland, in which Eric resided, and endeavoured to take the deposed king prisoner. Eric, however, defended himself with great bravery; and, when obliged to abandon the town, retired to the citadel. But provisions beginning to fail, he demanded an interview of the Swedish generals, and endeavoured to awaken the compassion of his former subjects. "You have," said the hapless monarch, "embittered

" bittered my life by your frequent revolts:
" you deposed me, and placed on the throne a
" usurper; and now you wish to drive me from
" this wretched spot of land, isolated in the
" midst of the sea, and the place in which I
" had hoped to terminate my unfortunate life
" in tranquillity and peace. Do not deprive
" me of that hope; for nothing can be more
" inglorious than to accumulate misfortunes on
" him who is already oppressed with mi-
" sery."

Christian allowed Eric to take up his abode in any town of Denmark, or of Pomerania, and sent to him a magnificent embassy, which was equally honourable to the politeness and humanity of that prince. Eric was affected with these instances of tenderness—so trifling a circumstance can afford consolation to a man in adversity! He hesitated, but at length determined to retire into Pomerania, whither he was escorted by the Danish deputies, and where he terminated his life in great tranquillity, without once attempting to regain possession of the throne. In the mean time, the pride, insolence, and despotic conduct, of Canutson, disgusted the Swedes, who deposed him, and invited Christian to pass over into Sweden, and accept their crown. A. D. 1458.

But though Christian obtained this good fortune, he had not the art of rendering it permanent, and enjoyed it only a few years. The Swedes complained of his absence from their kingdom, of his allowing the people to be oppressed with officers and governors, and of his expending in Denmark the wealth which he derived from Sweden. He also embroiled himself with

with the clergy, or at least with the archbishop of Upsal, who directed at will the whole strength of that formidable body. The king seized the archbishop, sent him prisoner into Denmark, and made himself master of all the fortresses within that prelate's jurisdiction. Katill, bishop of Lincoping and nephew to the archbishop, demanded the enlargement of his uncle, and threatened to use force in case of refusal. Christian, despising his menaces, was besieged in Stockholm, and at length obliged to retire into Denmark, and Canutson was reinstated on the throne of Sweden.

A. D. 1464.

Christian soon perceived his error in disobliging the body of the clergy, and endeavoured to repair it by releasing the archbishop, and loading him with civilities. Through the influence of that prelate, he re-ascended the throne of Sweden, and compelled Canutson to renounce the sovereignty. Christian's judicious policy, by which he left all authority in the hands of the senate, ensured to him the government of that kingdom; and his complaisance and address enabled him to procure a renewal of the union of Calmar. The Danish ministers prevailed on the Swedes to promise that, on the death of Christian, they would elect his son John king, whom they had themselves already acknowledged. He descended to the grave after a reign of thirty-three years, and is said to have been equalled by few in justice, courage, magnificence, and genuine magnanimity.

On the death of Christian, his son John was not immediately recognised king of Sweden by the states, who appointed Steen Sture regent of the kingdom.

A. D. 1481.

Not

Not considering himself, as excluded from the throne, he attacked and defeated the regent, who consented to acknowledge him king, and attended at his coronation. But the Swedes, availing themselves of the good disposition of their monarch, continued to have a regent, who sometimes accorded with, and sometimes opposed, the wishes of the king: from whence resulted alternate intervals of peace and war. In an engagement between the contending parties, the queen of Denmark was made prisoner; but she was afterwards liberated, to the great satisfaction of both nations, between whom that princess, equally the object of affection and esteem, effected a reconciliation. The Norwegians revolted, and John marched an army into their country, and reduced them to obedience. He carried on an obstinate war against the inhabitants of Lubec; who, supported by the assistance of the other Hanseatic towns, resisted him with spirit, and did not yield till they had obtained very advantageous terms.

This prince has been praised for his moderation, his love of his people, his amiable and social qualities, his aversion to every kind of ostentation, his patience, and his great wisdom. He was capable of appreciating human greatness. Crossing an arm of the sea, he was surprised by a storm, which drove him on the coast. An inundation of the country detained him in that inconvenient spot longer than he wished. During this delay, the king walked along the shore with his attendants, and exclaimed to them—"That, truly, is the work of "the king of kings, who needs neither army "nor cannon, nor other implements of war, to

" keep us blockaded here! This element alone " is sufficient for his purpose. Wherefore, let " us, who have never bowed nor submitted " to an earthly power, humbly prostrate our- " selves before that heavenly and almighty " Lord, whom the earth and sea obey." He promoted science, encouraged men of learning, and was a benefactor to the academy of Copenhagen. In a word, he was as wise and as amiable a prince as ever swayed the Danish sceptre.

A. D. 1513. On the death of John, his son, Christian II. was elected king of Denmark. As the clemency of the father had won the affections of his subjects, the glaring injustice and cruelty of the son alienated the hearts of the Danes. Though he had married Isabella, princess of Austria, from which alliance he expected considerable advantages, he kept a mistress, named Columbula, who died young, and whose death was thought to have been occasioned by poison. Suspecting that one of his courtiers, called Torbern, had participated her favours, the king, amid the festivity of a banquet, urged him to avow the fact. " I have," replied Torbern, " loved Columbula, and so- " licited her favour, but could never obtain my " desire." Immediately he was arrested and imprisoned, and the matter being brought before the senate, he was acquitted, because the law had assigned no punishment for simple concupiscence. Dissatisfied with this decision, Christian re-assembled the judges, and surrounded them with an armed populace, whose cries struck terror into the souls of the senators. They now gave their verdict in the following terms:—We do not judge Torbern; but his

" own

" own words condemn him." The tyrant immediately replied, " Since he is condemned, he " shall die;" and, accordingly, gave orders for his execution.

This atrocious action of the king excited universal fear, which was augmented by Christian suffering himself to be absolutely governed by Sigebrette, Columbula's mother, an insolent and intriguing woman, who was void of compassion for the poor, of regard for the rich, of respect for the laws, and who acknowledged no other rule than the passions of the monarch, which she seconded with equal address and effrontery. She commanded with despotic authority, disposed of all places and preferments, imposed taxes at pleasure, and exacted them with such rigour that the household furniture and clothing of those who did not pay them were seized and publicly sold.

This tyrannical conduct excited universal indignation. But Sigebrette, not content with these acts of oppression, molested certain poor students who lived by public charity, who were in the habit of going from house to house to solicit alms, and who were distinguished by a particular dress. She determined to abolish the order, and prohibited them from asking, and others from granting, relief. This violent proceeding raised a general outcry in the kingdom; and it was remembered that, in some instances, the king had betrayed a propensity to Lutheranism. The clergy took fire, and supported the cause of the poor students. The matter, however, was compromised; but the toleration of Christian mortified the papists, and divided the people into two parties, which at first were ex-

tremely adverse to each other, but which at length united against him, or at least deprived him of employing the one in opposition to the other.

A.D. 1520. Partly by negociation, partly by military success, he had procured himself to be acknowledged and crowned king of Sweden; but his authority was restricted by the senate, which Sigebrette and his ministers advised him to abolish, as the only means of securing the quiet and undisturbed possession of the throne. It was necessary, they said, to humble the nobles, and to confine his attentions to the peasantry and artisans, who were the most easily gained by trifling presents, and were the least interested in opposing the will of the sovereign. Pursuant to this advice, Christian invited the senators and chief nobles to a great banquet, and caused them to be arrested.

He seemed at first disposed to proceed against them by judicial trials and erected a tribunal composed of Danish commissioners; but the forms of legal process appearing to him too slow and uncertain, he ordered the prisoners to execution. Nothing could equal the consternation and dismay of the people, when the illustrious victims were brought forth to be immolated at the shrine of ambition, cruelty, and perfidy. Among the first was Eric Vasa, whose son, Gustavus, afterwards ascended the throne of Sweden; and the rest following in long procession, to the number of more than ninety, were all sacrificed in one day. No discrimination was made between those who had actually declared sentiments inimical to Christian, and those who might possibly become his enemies.

The

The wives of the unfortunate victims, and their children yet in early youth, were not spared. Not satisfied with the blood of so many noble personages, the king suffered his troops to commit the most shocking enormities on the most conspicuous and opulent citizens, who had viewed with indifference, or even perhaps with secret joy, the destruction of a body whose privileges excited their jealousy and hatred.

After Christian's return to Denmark, he continued to exercise the same cruelties, and, as the tiger which has once tasted blood ever thirsts for more, the king shed copious streams of it in that kingdom. Even the clergy experienced the effects of his rage. At length, the tyranny of Christian, and the weariness of submission, drove the people from murmurs to resistance, from resistance to aggression; and, so general was the insurrection that, wherever the king turned his eyes, he saw none but enemies, who with uplifted swords threatened his life.

In the mean time, the Swedes, having recovered from their first stupor, eagerly ran to arms, and enlisted themselves under the banner of Gustavus Vasa, the son of Eric, a youth of intrepid spirit, and unbroken by misfortunes, who, having lain some time as it were buried in the mines of Dalecarlia, converted the companions of his labours into soldiers, changed the implements of their toils into swords, and at their head issued from those gloomy and dismal caverns. His first attempts were prosperous and successful. Christian, terrified by the insurrection, sent Gustavus a message, that, unless he immediately laid down his arms, death should be inflicted on his mother and sister, whom the

tyrant held in captivity. At this menace, the young hero hesitated; but impelled by the desire of liberating his country, which suppressed the tender feelings of natural affection, he continued to fight and to conquer; and both the princesses were put to death.

During these proceedings in Sweden, confusion and revolt pervaded every part of Denmark. Christian was deposed by a general diet held at Wibdrg, who informed him of the decree passed for his deposition. He then condescended to supplicate those subjects whom he had treated with such pride and barbarity; and, after unavailing promises and abject requests, accompanied with such tears as adversity extorts from humbled arrogance, he abdicated the sovereignty. He equipped a fleet of twenty sail, on board of which he put his treasures, the regal jewels, the records and public acts of government, together with his children, his wife, and the execrable Sigebrette, and sailed from Copenhagen. But his brother-in-law, the emperor of Germany, received him with coldness and indifference; and he was viewed by all with the abhorrence justly due to his infamous conduct, for which he was branded with the appellation of the Nero of the north. He attempted, however, to recover his crown, and again made his appearance in Denmark; but the only consequence of his efforts was a dungeon, in which he languished twenty-seven years.

A. D. 1523. On the abdication of Christian II. his uncle Frederic I. duke of Holstein, who, having been persecuted by his nephew, had not conceived himself bound to assist him in his difficulties, ascended the throne of Denmark.

mark. At a general diet of the Danes, convoked for the purpose, he was declared king; and the states of Norway also proclaimed him with the same formalities. He was desirous of re-uniting the three kingdoms, and for that purpose wrote to some of the principal nobility of Sweden; but the Swedish crown was worn by a man capable of defending it. Besides, Frederic, who acquired the surname of Pacific, showed little eagerness to regain a kingdom which he considered as completely lost. The friendly advances of Gustavus were politely received by him; and he answered them by honourably restoring the captive Swedes, and by forming an alliance with that monarch.

At this period, Frederic convoked a general diet of the states; and, having openly avowed himself a protestant, obtained a decision that every subject of Denmark should be at liberty to embrace either the doctrines of Luther, or of Rome; that no person should be persecuted on account of his religion; and that the religious of all denominations should be permitted to marry. In consequence of this decree, the abbies and cloisters were deserted, all austerities disregarded, and Lutheranism was every where publicly preached and embraced. The clergy, however, of each party engaged in contests, in which the king was obliged to interpose. The city of Malmoe erected the standard of Luther, publicly prohibited mass, the worship of idols, and other superstitions of the church of Rome; and the rest of the cities followed the example, and popery became nearly extinct. The New Testament and the Psalms of David were translated into the vernacular language; and chairs of

of theology were founded, and filled with protestant professors. The bishops complained of these innovations; but the king endeavoured to quiet their alarms, by promising that another diet should more minutely regulate the affairs of religion. Frederic I. died after a reign of ten years, and left the clergy in a state of uncertainty, in consequence of which the protestant religion gained ground, and gathered strength.

A. D. 1533. He was succeeded by his son Christian III. who, at a general diet convened for the purpose, was elected and proclaimed king of Denmark. The chief work of the reign of this prince was the consolidation of protestantism. He saw himself supported by the senate and nobility, who had placed the crown on his head; and, without fear, therefore, attacked the clergy of highest dignity and influence, who had opposed his election to the throne. A diet, which he assembled at Odensee, under pretence of regulating the discipline of the church, furnished him with reasons, good or bad, for the abolition of the episcopacy. An order was issued for apprehending the bishops, who were allowed no other alternative than submission to the king's will, expressed in what were denominated the regulatory laws, or deposition from their office. Some of them became martyrs to their religion, and died in prison. The rest of the clergy were also required to subscribe a confession of faith; and, on their refusal, were deposed from their office. Many of them quitted the kingdom; and the people, being thus deprived of popish pastors, embraced the doctrine which the king proposed to them. The diet also passed a decree, by which all the

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church-lands, towns, fortresses, and villages, were annexed to the crown, and the temporal power of the clergy was for ever abolished.

These measures seemed so rigorous, and severe, that even Luther himself wrote to Christian, and advised him to treat the clergy with more lenity; and, though he disapproved of the doctrine, to behave with due respect to the ancient religion of the kingdom. He suggested to him this politic observation, that, by utterly annihilating the temporal power of the church, he deprived the crown of the firmest support of its prerogatives; and that the equilibrium of government being destroyed, with the power of the bishops, the nobles would in consequence acquire an undue influence in the state, which must prove injurious to the regal authority, and to the welfare of the people.

This prediction was fully verified in the sequel: the citizens and peasantry were reduced to more abject slavery, under their haughty lords, than they had ever experienced while the ecclesiastical power served as a counterpoise; and the prerogatives of the crown became entirely dependent on the will of the nobility. If at any time the clergy endeavoured to obtain a preponderancy, the aid of the nobles could easily restore an equilibrium: but, when these were become the masters, no expedient remained, except a revolution in the government, which could release the commonalty from the yoke of their tyrants. The effect of Christian's improvidence was not perceptible for some time after. Under him Denmark enjoyed internal peace and tranquility; and he transmitted the quiet possession of his kingdom to his son. He lived happy

happy in his family, and was honoured with the glorious appellation of the father of his people.

A. D. 1558. Frederic II. the son and successor of Christian III. was of a disposition similar to that of his father, whose conduct he also imitated. The first years of each of their reigns were passed amidst the din of war. Both fought with great courage, and exhibited much military ability; and both laid down their arms, and exalted their character by proving that they knew how to render their people powerful and happy. He engaged in a war with Sweden, which continued during a great part of his reign, and was attended with various vicissitudes of fortune. The Hanseatic towns, which were claimed by both nations, took an active part in these hostilities; and the city of Lubec, in particular, embraced the occasion of revenging itself on Sweden for the many restrictions imposed on its commerce. They concluded a treaty with the king of Denmark, and joined his fleet with a powerful squadron.

Frederic having made peace with Sweden, several commercial powers complained of the duties exacted in the Sound; and the English, Dutch, and all the Hanseatic towns, remonstrated against this impost, as an arbitrary measure, and a great discouragement to commerce; but the king would not listen to their complaints. The city of Lubec still retained a considerable portion of her ancient power. When in the zenith of her glory, that town is said to have aspired to the hope of conquering Denmark; and what, perhaps, will appear more astonishing, actually sold that kingdom to an English monarch, who paid a part of the purchase

purchase money. Frederic held the balance between those commercial towns, and interested himself more than his predecessors in acquiring an influence over the affairs of Europe. He rendered commerce flourishing, respected the rights and property of his subjects, and obtained the esteem and affection of his people.

On the death of Frederic II. his son, Christian IV. who was only eleven in years of age, was proclaimed king of Denmark and Norway, and four regents were appointed to govern during his minority. As the kingdom had for several years enjoyed profound peace, the regency was in no danger of being disturbed by the noise and tumults of war; and it greatly increased their security that the domestic factions, in Sweden, prevented that nation from resuming the affair of Livonia, and other subjects, which had occasioned a difference between the two crowns. For some time, the principal care of the regency was employed in attending to the education of the young monarch, for whom masters were procured in all the different accomplishments of mind and body from different parts of Europe; and their success even exceeded their expectations. Christian was not only able to answer all the embassadors in their several languages, but could even dictate or write instructions to his ministers, at an age when a prince is hardly capable of following a chain of reasoning. He possessed great dexterity in all the manly exercises, and was fond of exhibiting proofs of it to the people. A. D. 1588.

Having engaged in a war against Sweden, Charles, king of that nation, incensed at all the reiterated disgraces which he sustained from the arms

arms of Christian, challenged him to single combat. This summons, however, the Danish monarch declined with marks of contempt. A reconciliation was soon after effected, and a peace concluded between the two kingdoms, through the mediation of the king of England. The hostilities, in which Christian was engaged, were severely detrimental to Denmark, by enfeebling her maritime strength, and ruining her finances. Being chosen head of the protestant league in favour of the elector Palatine, he took an active part in the affairs of Germany; and thereby involved himself, a short time previous to his death, in another war with Sweden.

In order to re-establish his finances, Christian conceived a project, which, on account of its extraordinary magnitude, has been considered as chimerical and absurd. He intended to injure the trade of the United Provinces to the Levant, by opening an immediate intercourse with Persia and the east, through the rivers which flow into the Baltic. For that purpose a canal was to be cut through a neck of land belonging to Holstein, in order to avoid the circuitous navigation of the Sound, and to protect the commerce from being injured by strangers. The Danish monarch commenced the work, but projects of that nature require a length of time before they can be crowned with ultimate success. Happy it certainly is for mankind, when they do not prove entirely abortive. The stream of commerce has been diverted from its usual course by means much less powerful; and great expectations might be formed from Christian's activity, and his stubborn perseverance in the prosecution of plans once adopted.

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This prince was possessed of admirable qualifications of mind and body, retained all the fire and vehemence of youth to an advanced age, and commanded his fleets and armies in person, after he had worn the crown sixty years. Unfortunately, however, he continued also subject to the passions which often accompany youth, and was addicted to women; a circumstance that has in some measure tarnished his reputation. But with his faults we cannot refuse him the reputation of having been a monarch remarkable for firmness, an intrepid warrior, a prince of extensive genius, and of great generosity and magnanimity.

On the death of Christian IV. his son, Frederic III. was raised to the throne of Denmark, and displayed equal abilities with his father in war and in civil administration. The jealousy of this prince was excited against Sweden by the suggestions of the United Provinces, that if Charles X. reduced Livonia, Pomerania and Prussia, he would possess himself of the coasts of the Baltic, and injure the commerce of Denmark. Fearing this danger, Frederic declared war against Charles, who projected the invasion of Fionia in the winter, before the Danish monarch could collect a sufficient force to oppose him. The scheme of the Swedish sovereign was greatly facilitated by a hard frost, which rendered transports unnecessary, and Charles set out from Kiel, and marching over the Little Belt on the ice, attacked and defeated a strong body of Danes, who endeavoured to oppose his passage; but he lost three regiments, under whom the ice broke, and who were swallowed up in the chasm. He then made an A. D. 1648.

attack on the Danish vessels locked up by the ice, but was repulsed and baffled by the skill and intrepidity of the admiral.

Passing over into Zealand, Charles marched towards Copenhagen, which was at first thrown into consternation by the approach of the Swedish monarch; but the presence of Frederic, who was endowed with genius and valour suited to the emergency of the case, animated the citizens to withstand and oppose the enemy. The Danish sovereign became sensible that vigorous measures and hazardous enterprizes were necessary at the present crisis: and he wanted neither ability to plan nor courage to execute any project for the good of his kingdom. Neither precipitation, nor dilatory hesitation, marked his conduct. Always prepared to act, he personally watched over every measure which was to be adopted for the purpose of maturing the successes, and reaping from them their full advantage. By his incitements, the citizens of Copenhagen became intrepid soldiers, bravely fought in small boats against the ships of the besiegers, and rushed forward through a tempest of flames. Their wives and children seconded their ardour, and the queen animated them by her example and presence. That memorable siege furnished instances of almost every species of heroism. After Charles was compelled to retreat, Frederic rewarded the valour and fidelity of the citizens by well-merited privileges, and concluded a treaty of peace with Sweden, A. D. 1660.

The state of the kingdom at this period exhibited the defects of the government, and excited a wish in the people to find the means of remedying them.

them. The prophecy of Luther was by this time fully accomplished: the nobles had gradually and imperceptibly acquired an undue influence, and obtained a power which proved very onerous to the people. The possessions of the clergy, which had been annexed to the royal domains, they had taken on lease; from leaseholders, they had insensibly become proprietors; and, under pretence of their ancient prerogatives, they refused to pay the taxes to which those possessions had been formerly subject; and hence the whole burden of taxation fell on the lower classes. The bishops and clergy still existed in the kingdom; but, as the prelacies had been stripped of their principal riches, the nobles no longer sought them; and they were in the possession of commoners, whose influence the nobility disdained.

John Swan, bishop of Copenhagen, however, formed the design of overthrowing that proud colossus which strutted in heraldry, and for that purpose joined himself to John Kansen, a merchant, chief of the class of citizens, a man equally capable of projecting a great enterprize or of carrying it into execution. Having associated themselves with others, to whom they made known their design, they consulted how they might compel the nobles to bear their just proportion of the public expences; and were sensible that they would procure an exemption from every tax imposed on them by the senate, which was entirely composed of the nobility. Conceiving, therefore, that they must commence by weakening the senate, they determined to extend the royal prerogative; and place it on so

firm a foundation as should for ever secure it from all danger of being shaken.

At this time, the diet was assembled at Copenhagen, the inhabitants of which were all warmly devoted to the king and queen, whose great qualities they had admired, and whose kindness and benevolence they had experienced, during the siege. A germ of discord had very clearly developed itself between the citizens and the nobles, the latter of whom were jealous of the privileges granted to the former; who, being now accustomed to arms, were proud of their success, and offended with the persons that envied them those favours which they had so well merited. In the first sitting of the states, the confederates presented a memorial expressive of the situation of the people, and the absolute impossibility of raising the necessary supplies for the service of the government, unless the nobility would bear their just proportion of the taxes. The nobles, being numerous, powerful, and insolent, treated this proposal with the greatest disdain; and declared that the people were vassals, and vassals they should remain. Reconsidering the matter, however, they consented to submit to the payment; but for two years only, and with certain restrictions.

Having thus, as they imagined, conceded sufficiently, they drew upon their part a statement of grievances, in which they inserted insulting reflexions on the citizens. In the mean time, the two other orders declared that the contributions which had been produced, even though the nobles should give their unrestricted consent to them, were insufficient; and that it was necessary

mary the fiefs and domains of the crown, which the nobility had hitherto enjoyed under very moderate rents, should be farmed out to the highest bidder. This proposal was received with indignation by the nobles, who were touched in a sensible part, and who uttered personalities even in the hall of the diet; and, without doors, the deputies viewed each other with hatred and contempt. One of the principal citizens, returning from the king's palace, was met by a nobleman, who abruptly asked him, "What "have you been doing there?" The other not answering him immediately, he pointed to the tower, which served as the state-prison, and added, "Do you know that place, and the use "for which it is appropriated?" Without opening his lips, the citizen pointed to the steeple of the principal church, where hung the alarm-bell, whose sound could instantly convene the the people against the nobles.

During these transactions, Frederic, who was apprised of and consented to the projected revolution of the two orders, remained in the recesses of his palace, and quietly awaited the turn of events; or rather directed them. Without suffering their first ardour to cool, the citizens and clergy set out for the place where the nobles held their sittings; and, on their way, were accompanied by a countless multitude of people, who testified their approbation of these proceedings by loud and reiterated acclamations of joy. Having entered the hall, Nansen commenced a succinct but energetic discourse, in which he displayed the evils of the state, enumerated the important services which the king had rendered to the nation, represented that none but he who

had rescued her from impending danger would be able to save her; and concluded by observing, that both gratitude and necessity rendered it necessary, that the crown should be hereditary in the family of Frederic.

The nobles, not prepared for so sudden and decisive a resolution, answered with hesitation, that they were ready to participate in the honour of conferring so glorious a present on the king and his posterity; but that they wished so great and important a work should be conducted with cool prudence and mature deliberation; and, while the deputies of the two orders were listening to their harangues, they sent persons to sound the king's disposition, and to know whether he would be satisfied, if the crown remained in the male line. Frederic answered that what the senate projected would be agreeable to him, unless the right of succession were also extended to the females. In the meantime, Nansen declared that the two orders had formed their resolution, and that if the nobles refused to co-operate with them in this measure, they would immediately repair to the king, who waited for them.

Having thus spoken, they departed, and were received with great affability by Frederic, who thanked them, and told them that, though he would not decline their offer, it must be sanctioned by unanimous approbation, and that the consent of the nobles was an indispensable condition; that he should never forget the zeal and affection which they had evinced for him; and concluded by desiring them to continue their sessions until the affair should be brought to a happy termination, by the union of the three orders

orders. In fact, the king knew that he possessed the means of accelerating the union: the citizens of Copenhagen had been martialised during the siege, and were all devoted to his interest; and, among the senators, there were some on whom he could depend.

Whilst the nobles, therefore, were hesitating and deliberating on this matter, Frederic ordered the gates of the city to be shut, in order, as he pretended, to secure the diet from any danger which the ferment of the people might occasion. But when the assembly, struck with astonishment and terror, sent a deputation to inquire into the reasons of that extraordinary measure, the king answered, that the private evasion of some of their members, and the fear that others would imitate their example, and endeavour to break up the assembly of the states, were the causes for issuing that order; and that they might continue their deliberations in perfect safety.

Having briefly consulted on the subject, the nobles sent to inform the king, and the other orders, that they were ready to do what had been proposed to them, and to subscribe in every thing to the will of Frederic. Measures were accordingly taken to give to the revolution, which had been thus effected, every characteristic that could stamp it with solemnity and durability. The king being rendered absolute, all the acts which restricted his authority, and to which he had formerly sworn, were annulled; and his subjects took a new oath of allegiance. After which, "of his own certain knowledge "and plenary power," without the concurrence of any other authority, the monarch regulated

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the several parts of government, especially the mode of succession, and issued what has been denominated the "royal law."

Since the year 1660, which is the epoch of the revolution, the royal law has been considered as the national code, in all things pertaining to the succession and the power of the monarch. A number of ordinances, fraught with wisdom and moderation, was added to it by Frederic; who, previously to the revolution, had enjoyed the esteem of the nobles, and now regained their affection in an equal degree, as he already possessed that of the other two orders. To his political talents this monarch also added the moral virtues. No sooner had he obtained possession of absolute authority than he moderated that passion for glory, which he had formerly betrayed in undertaking some petty wars. He applied himself to restore by his own example the ancient simplicity of dress, and frugality at table; to re-establish his finances; to encourage merit, industry, and commerce; to reward those who had served him with fidelity; to redress grievances; to protect the oppressed; to relieve the indigent; and, in a word, to become a father to his subjects, and a friend to mankind.

A. D. 1670. On the death of Frederic III. his son Christian V. ascended the throne of Denmark, at a time, and under circumstances, that foreboded a reign equally pacific and durable. This prince, who was deemed one of the greatest monarchs in Europe, was brave, prudent, and affable, nor was he taxed with any faults except an excessive diffidence in his own understanding, and the concession of too great power to his ministers, whom he punished with rigour when they

they dared to abuse his confidence or authority. He spoke most of the modern languages, was fond of the sciences, and had made a great progress in those branches of the mathematics which relate to the military art. He was never so much pleased as when he was presented with some new geographical chart, or plan of fortification. He carried on a war against Sweden, and laid siege to the city of Hamburgh, which agreed to pay him two hundred and twenty thousand crowns.

When his son, Frederick IV. ascended the throne, he found it necessary to act on the principles of Christian, and to keep the duchy of Holstein dependent on the crown of Denmark. This prince was more successful at sea and on land than any of his predecessors, and engaged in a war with Sweden, which was concluded under the mediation of George I. king of Great Britain. The prosperous fortune of Frederic rendered him enterprising, and ready to listen to the extravagant projects of his courtiers, to whom he distributed the public treasure with too lavish a hand. He died in the sixtieth year of his age, greatly regretted by his subjects, and esteemed by the several potentates of Europe. A. D. 1699.

Christian VI. succeeded his father in the throne of Denmark; and, though he was deemed avaricious, instead of imposing new taxes upon his people, he abolished some of the old ones. Spirituous liquors had been subjected to very heavy duties, and the venders being informed that the king intended to abolish them, because they were not sufficiently productive, offered to pay a higher price A. D. 1730.

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for their licences. "You are mistaken, gentle-
"men," replied Christian, "the duties are al-
"ready too productive, since my subjects com-
"plain of the exactions which they occasion:"
and he suppressed them.

A. D. 1746. Christian was succeeded by his son Frederic V. who, on his accession to the throne, formed the resolution of discharging all the debts of the crown. The principal creditors of the state, wishing to divert him from his purpose, offered to reduce the rate of interest, if he thought it too high. "The
"money," replied Frederic, "locked up in
"my coffers, would be of no use to the public;
"but when I shall have repaid it, you will do
"me a pleasure, and render me a service, by
"lending those sums at low interest to my
"subjects, who may thus be enabled to extend
"their commerce and support their manufac-
"tures."—This mild and pacific prince had two wives, Louisa of England, and Mary of Brunswick; by the first of whom he had a son and three daughters; the latter, whom he left a widow at an early age, bore to him a son named Frederic. His mother, Sophia of Brandenburg, was living at the time of his death.

A. D. 1766. Frederic V. was succeeded by his son Christian VII. who was then only in the seventeenth year of his age, and whose simple and unaffected graces captivated every heart, whilst the charms of an easy and fluent elocution interested the feelings of his hearers. The affability of the youthful monarch, and the hopes ever excited by the accession of a new sovereign, invited to his court the gay train of pleasures which had been banished by his defunct

funct predecessor. The same year also in which he ascended the throne, Christian married Caroline Matilda, sister to George III. king of England. This princess, who was then in the sixteenth year of her age, was possessed of great regularity of features, and a dazzling fairness of complexion. Christian, however, treated her with coldness; and, on being reproved for his conduct by his grand-mother, Sophia, he replied that it was "not genteel to love one's "wife." This answer was doubtless suggested to him by the dissipated young debauchees, whom he made his constant companions, and in whose society, even in the streets of his capital, he indulged in riotous pleasures, which sometimes exposed him to personal danger.

In order to wean him from these bad habits, he was advised to travel. Quitting, therefore, his youthful consort, who had recently brought him a son, he set out for England, and visited the court of his brother-in law, who received him with great magnificence. Having seen most of the principal towns and cities in England, he passed into Holland, and from thence proceeded to Paris, where he excited a kind of enthusiasm, and won the unanimous suffrages of the court and of the capital. He was preparing to visit Italy, when he received intelligence which induced him to hasten back to his dominions. The return of the king was said to have been occasioned by a misunderstanding between the three queens. Mary, the king's step mother, whose conduct had been hitherto marked with timidity and reserve, and whose whole attention seemed to center in the education of her son, was bold, enterprising, capable of risking every

thing for the sake of power; and the young queen Caroline availed herself perhaps too much of her pre-eminence of rank, in her conduct towards a rival, who had not had time to wear off the habits and feelings of her late exalted station. The old queen Sophia was embarrassed between them; but the arrival of Christian settled their respective pretensions, and matters seemed to be compromised.

The king had taken out with him on his travels, and now brought back, a physcian, named Struensee, whom he distinguished as a favourite, and constituted first minister with almost unlimited political power. This rapid and extraordinary elevation excited many comments; and envy and malignity added a thousand reports injurious to the honour of Caroline Matilda. It must, however, be admitted, that her imprudence was great and inexcusable; and that not only in private, but at the theatre, in the streets of Copenhagen, and before multitudes of spectators, she manifested a very injudicious preference for Struensee. He was himself sensible of her majesty's indiscretion, and endeavoured, but in vain, to induce her from prudential motives, to moderate the testimonies of her partiality towards him in public.

The king was a passive and quiet spectator of the favour of Struensee, and of the queen's attachment to him; and, though indifferent towards his wife, he nevertheless esteemed her: nor did he feel or expres the slightest resentment at her behaviour. His mind and body were equally debilitated by excess; and he was without activity, and almost without perception or sentiment. He sunk into a state of imbecility.

lity, which, while it rendered him capable of receiving the worst impressions, disqualified him from appreciating their truth, or taking any part in the management of public affairs; and the administration, therefore, devolved on the queen, Struensee, and their adherents. The court, meanwhile, was plunged in diversions, and immersed in pleasures, which were soon to be succeeded by scenes of a different nature.

Struensee was unquestionably a man of abilities, capable of great application to business, rapid and decisive in his resolutions, and enlarged and patriotic in his views; and many of his measures tended to the melioration, improvement, and aggrandizement of Denmark. But he possessed neither the profound policy, the the severe vigilance, nor the superior judgment, requisite for maintaining him in his sudden elevation; and, towards the close of his ministry, he acted without foresight or address; as if, with the difficulties which increased around him, he lost the strength and presence of his understanding. His enemies were numerous, powerful, and implacable; and at their head were the queen-dowager, and her son prince Frederic; whose party was joined by several persons of the first quality and consideration, who were impelled by ambition, and indignant at the preference shewn to an obscure stranger, or irritated at their exclusion from office. Among the chiefs of the malcontents were counts Rantzau and Ostein, and colonel Kollet Banner. Various consultations were held; and, towards the close of the year 1771, they resolved to proceed to action without further delay. The indiscretion of the young queen, and the imprudence of Struensee,

who had dismissed the master of the wardrobe, and substituted in his place a certain friend of his, named Brandt, served to ripen the machinations prepared for their destruction.

The malcontents determined to seize on the queen Matilda, and the principal persons attached to her, at the close of a masked ball, which was to be given in the royal palace, on the 15th of January. Accordingly, every one having retired to their respective apartments, the chiefs of the enterprize were left free to commence their operations. Rantzau, therefore, without loss of time, entered the bed-chamber of the king, awoke him, and acquainted him, that a conspiracy had been formed against his person and dignity, at the head of which were his wife, Struensee, and their associates. He then besought his majesty to consult his own security by instantly signing an order for their arrest, which Rantzau tendered to him, and used every argument to enforce his solicitation. Christian, however, though feeble in mind, and taken by surprize, hesitated, and refused to affix his name to the paper. Rantzau, therefore, called to the bedside the queen-dowager and prince Frederic, who, by means of expostulations, supported by exaggerated or false representations of the danger which he incurred from delay, at length procured his reluctant consent; and he signed the order, which was immediately carried into execution.

A. D. 1772.

Koller Banner, repairing to Struensee's chamber, forced open the door, and seized him in his bed. He was asleep when this event took place, for which he was so totally unprepared that, having no clothes near the bedside, except his masquerade

masquerade dress, he was necessitated to put on the breeches which he had worn at the ball; and, the weather being cold, he was permitted to wrap himself in his fur cloak, and was conveyed in a coach to the citadel. During this transaction, Beringshold, a man of a desperate but intrepid character, accompanied by some soldiers, entered the room of Brandt; who, unlike Struensee, started up, seized his sword, and prepared for resistance. But the soldiers, by Beringshold's orders, levelling their pieces, and threatening to fire on him, he gave up his sword, surrendered himself a prisoner, and, in the same manner as his companion in misfortune, was instantly conducted under a guard to the citadel. Various other noblemen and gentlemen, their adherents, were also arrested, or had centinels placed at the door of their apartments.

But the most dangerous and important act of the enterprize still remained to be performed: that of arresting the queen, Caroline-Matilda. A Danish female attendant was sent to her with a paper, which she requested her majesty to peruse, and which contained a request, rather than an order, and stated that "the king of Denmark, "for reasons of a private nature, wished her to "remove to one of the royal palaces in the coun- "try for a few days." No sooner had the queen perused the contents of the paper, to which she saw the royal signature affixed, than she instantly comprehended the nature and extent of her misfortunes; and conscious that, if she could only gain access to the king, she could immediately overturn the plans of her enemies, she sprung out of bed, and attempted to leave her room, but was opposed by an officer, whom

Rantzau had placed in the passage. Rendered almost frantic by this insult, added to her distress, she seized him by the hair, and demanded to see count Struensee, or the king. "Madam," said the officer, "I only do my duty, and obey "my orders. There is no count Struensee now, "nor can your majesty see the king."

Having, however, pushed the officer aside, she advanced to the door of the antichamber, where two soldiers had crossed their firelocks, in order to stop her progress, and whom the queen commanded to let her pass, adding promises of reward if they obeyed. The soldiers fell on their knees, and said, "It is a sad duty, "madam, but we must perform it; as our heads "are answerable for our conduct." The queen, however, stepped over the muskets, and ran to the king's apartment, into which she entered by force; but her enemies apprehensive of her influence over Christian, had removed him to another part of the palace. The queen, exhausted by the agitation of her mind, and by such exertions of body, attempted no further resistance, but returned to her chamber, where she was aided to dress herself, and informed that she must instantly quit Copenhagen. She was then put into a coach, that took the road to Cronsborg, which they soon reached, and in which fortress the queen was confined.

The method which Caroline had pursued, to prevent her husband from acquiring a knowledge of her conduct, was to surround the king, as far as in her power, with persons attached to her interest. The same plan was adopted by the queen-dowager, who, in order to secure the monarch on her side, removed from about him

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all those who might have been disposed to speak to him in his wife's behalf. Thus was Christian kept in a kind of captivity, which he endured without perceiving it, because his keepers (if we may be allowed the expression) permitted him to enjoy his accustomed amusements. But, as the easy temper of the king left room to apprehend, that he might suffer himself to be affected with sentiments of indulgence towards his wife, the cabal determined to separate them for ever by divorce.

The proofs being more than sufficient, the legal process was neither tedious nor intricate. While confined in the citadel, Struensee drew up his famous confession, which did more honour to his ability, as a writer, than to his constancy or fortitude, as a man; and in which he avowed, or divulged, more than his enemies probably expected, and perhaps more than was ever true. At the scaffold, he manifested contrition, as well as pusillanimity; while Brandt, who was, no otherwise culpable than in not revealing the secret of his friend, met his punishment with a sort of careless and unprincipled intrepidity. The fate of the imprisoned queen was long doubtful; and she probably owed it to her near alliance with the king of Great Britain, that the new ministry of Denmark did not adopt extreme severity against her. It was proposed to immure her for life in some of the prisons of state; and the castle of Alborg, in the peninsula of Jutland, a solitary and sequestered province of the Danish dominions, was one destined for the purpose. The powerful and spirited interposition, however, of the British crown, procured her release, after she had passed more than four months

in the fortress of Cronsborg. She embarked at Elsineur, and landed at Stade in the Hanoverian dominions, where she was received with distinguished honours.

From thence she repaired to the castle of Zell, which had been rendered fit for her reception, and where the liberality of her brother, the king of Great Britain, provided her a becoming household, composed principally of Hanoverian nobility of both sexes. Here the queen, who was under no sort of restraint or confinement, except that which her rank and dignity necessarily imposed, had frequent drawing rooms, at which persons of condition were presented; and a theatre was fitted up for her amusement in the castle, where dramatic pieces were frequently performed.

Never was any princess more universally beloved; and never were the advantages of adversity on a mind naturally strong, well disposed, and good, more strikingly exemplified than in her. She possessed excellent talents, numerous resources, and great accomplishments: and, had her life been prolonged, she would doubtless have made ample atonement for the errors into which youth, inexperience, and flattery, had precipitated her while on the throne of Denmark. She is said to have carried on an epistolary correspondence with Christian. She died of a malignant fever at the age of twenty-four years, and will be considered by posterity as an amiable and unfortunate princess, whose errors were the result more of situation, example, and court-seduction, than of character or intention.

A. D. 1775.

This

This year, the court of Denmark formed an alliance with Russia, Prussia, and Sweden, in which the armed neutrality of the north was again revived; and by which the sovereignty of the seas, so long maintained by England, appeared likely to be endangered. This measure is said to have been occasioned by some Swedish and Danish vessels having been detained on their voyage by British ships of war, and carried into an English port. No sooner was it known that this convention had taken place, between the northern powers, than the British ministry dispatched Lord Whitworth, his majesty's embassador at the court of Russia, to Copenhagen; where by his address, aided by a strong squadron under the command of Admiral Dickson, who threatened to bombard the Danish capital, the misunderstanding seemed to be adjusted in a friendly and satisfactory manner. The courts of England and Denmark agree that the Danish vessels carried into Deal should be immediately released; and that the discussion, relative to the asserted right of the English to visit convoys, should be adjourned to a future day. A. D. 1800.

It was hoped that matters were settled for the present, and that the question would not be resumed till a more proper opportunity. But, probably through the influence of Paul I. another convention was concluded between the courts of Russia, Sweden, and Denmark; immediately after which, immense preparations were made by those powers to get ready a large confederate fleet of ships of war, which were to enter the North sea, and, having formed a junction with the armaments of the Batavian republic,

republic, to act in a hostile manner against Great Britain. England, however, informed of these preparations and of the intended destination of the fleets, equipped a large force with great expedition, which sailed from Yarmouth under the command of sir Hyde Parker, and lord Nelson, and arrived in the Categat.

A. D. 1801.

The British ministry, unwilling to commence hostilities with Denmark, and wishing to adjust the dispute which existed between the two countries in a friendly manner, endeavoured, but without success, to compromise the difference by negociation. The English admiral, therefore, sailed into the Sound with the fleet, and found that the Danes had moored in the front of Copenhagen a strong line of vessels, which they deemed impregnable. Lord Nelson, who volunteered his service on the occasion, attacked them on the second of April. The obstacles which he had to surmount were most formidable; but no effort of art, no advantage of nature, could resist the steady valour, the skill and judgment of this able and enterprising commander. The immediate point of assault consisted of six Danish ships of the line, eleven floating batteries, and several schooners. These were supported by the islands called the Crowns, by four sail of the line moored in the mouth of the harbour, and by some batteries on the isle of Amak.

After an engagement, which continued four hours, and was bravely contested on both sides, the Danish line of defence was completely destroyed, and the English fleet approached the city, threw bombs into the arsenal, and threatened

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the destruction of Copenhagen. At this interesting moment, the humanity of Lord Nelson induced him to send a flag of truce to the enemy, and to consent to a suspension of hostilities. An armistice was agreed on for fourteen weeks; and Great Britain having concluded a treaty with Russia, by which the right of searching neutral vessels sailing to belligerent ports was fixed on as an equitable, and it is to be hoped a permanent, basis, Denmark was invited to accede to the convention, and, accordingly, became a party in the treaty.

PRUSSIA.

CHAP. I.

The History of Prussia, to the Accession of Frederic II.

THOUGH Prussia has for a long time been divided into the German and Polish districts, it was certainly formerly united under the same princes, subject to the same government, and inhabited by the same people, who were probably descendants of the Sclavonians, the general stem of most of the northern nations. Stella conjectures that it derived its name from the Borussi, a particular race of the Surmati; who, migrating from the foot of the Riphean mountains, were tempted by the beauty and fertility of the country to settle in it.

This kingdom consists at present of various territories disseminated over Germany, Poland, Switzerland, and the northern regions, and which have been partly acquired from legal succession; but the greatest part of them have been obtained by war, violence, and usurpation. The principal divisions which compose this monarchy are ducal, now regal, Prussia, situated in Poland; Brandenburg, Prussian Pomerania, and Swedish Pomerania, in upper Saxony; Magdeburg, and Halberstadt, in lower Saxony; Glatz, in Bohemia; Minden, Ravensburg, Cleves, Lingen, Meurs,

Meurs, and Mark, in the duchy of Westphalia; East Friesland, Lippe, Gulick, and Tacklenburg, in the circle of Westphalia; Gelder, in the Netherlands; Neufchatel in Switzerland; a part of Silesia; and the territory wrested from Poland.

The soil, in general, is fertile in corn and other commodities; and the country is not deficient in a proportionate number of animals, common to the climate. The rivers and lakes abound with a great variety of fish; and in the vicinity, and on the shores of the Baltic, are found amazing quantities of amber, which is the production of a bilious foam, cast out by the *cachalot*, a fish resembling the whale. The principal rivers are, the Vistula, the Pregel, the Memel, the Passarage, and the Elbe; whose frequent and sudden inundations spread desolation and dismay.

Prussia being advantageously situated for trade, the extension of which is promoted by a college of commerce and navigation, a very considerable traffic is carried on with foreign nations; and, as the imports of this kingdom are trifling when compared to its exports, the balance of trade in its favour is greater than that of any other European country. In Prussia, the arts are daily improving, and the manufactures of glass, iron-works, silk, cloth, camblet, linen, stockings, paper, powder, copper, and brass, are particularly flourishing.

In 1755, the population of this kingdom was computed to amount to six hundred and thirty-six thousand persons capable of bearing arms: but, since that period, Prussia has received a large augmentation to its inhabitants, by a great

increase of territory in Poland, and by emigrations from France, Switzerland, Germany, and other countries.

The Prussian monarch is absolute and despotic. The peasants exhibit few peculiarities in dress, manners, or diversions, from their neighbours; and are chiefly held in a state of vassalage to the king or nobles. Lutheranism is the most predominant religion; yet every sect, whose tenets do not militate against civil government and legal subordination, is not only tolerated, but countenanced. The royal revenues arise principally from the produce of the excise, customs, and services, and from demesne lands, and yearly subsidies granted by the several states.

The capital of regal Prussia is Koningsberg, a city situated on the river Pregel, and founded by Premislaus I. king of Bohemia, in 1255, when he brought assistance to the Teutonic knights against the Prussian idolaters. It is properly divided into three towns, whose boundaries are formed by so many branches of the above-mentioned river, over which are seven bridges. It has an academy founded by one of the earliest dukes of Prussia, which is the only literary institution worthy of notice. The town-house, the exchange, and particularly the palace erected by the margrave Albert, are large and elegant structures. Koningsberg carries on a considerable trade in hemp and flax; though Oillau, which is its sea port, is seven miles distant.

Little Lithuania is reckoned among the provinces of regal Prussia, and acknowledges the sovereignty of the same monarch. Memel is its

ts principal town, which was built in 1279, and given to the grand-master of the Teutonic order in Prussia, by the governor of Livonia. It carries on an extensive trade with foreign nations, in flax, linseed, thread, and hemp; and has a strong citadel for its defence.

The ancient Prussians were barbarians and robbers, who lived on raw flesh, drank the blood of horses, sacrificed prisoners taken in war, and were the constant enemies and disturbers of the neighbouring nations. For a great number of years, they had no form of government: property was in common, and every man seized on whatever best suited his ambition and inclination. Polygamy in its fullest extent was allowed; and parents possessed an absolute power over the lives of their children. They committed adulterers to the flames; and killed, through pity, those sick persons whom they deemed incurable. They adored snakes, which they fed in their caves, and considered as tutelary deities. They also revered the oak, and performed their public worship and private orgies under the shade of a tree, or in groves consecrated to the purposes of religion.

The Prussians, having united themselves with the Sudini, assumed the same form of government; and matters remained in the same situation till the Germans and Poles conquered part of the country. These last, however, finding themselves unable to establish Christianity, and to compel the inhabitants to renounce their idolatrous worship, requested the assistance of the Teutonic knights, who, in process of time, and after many bloody engagements, succeeded in subjecting the whole to their jurisdiction; and,

as some writers believe, exterminated the ancient race of the Prussians.

The Teutonic knights of the hospital of Saint Mary the Virgin, having been incorporated into a military order, in reward for extraordinary valour, soon became rich by the donations of mistaken piety and superstition. After the sultan, Saladine of Egypt, had expelled the christians from the Holy Land, they obtained a settlement in Prussia, the gift of Conrade, duke of Mazovia. Culm became their first residence; and by the conditions and donations they were confined to this district, unless they should make conquests from their pagan neighbours. According to the plan of the original institution, they were the enemies of idolators, whether Saracens or Prussians; and these military missionaries were so zealous, in the propagation of the christian religion, that they became the sovereigns of ducal Prussia, subdued Livonia, and extended their conquests to Riga. A. D. 1210.

Many of the Prussian provinces, however, indignant at the insolence of the order, and the rapaciousness of their government, threw off the Teutonic yoke, and put themselves under the protection of Casimir IV. king of Poland. From this period, we may date the decline of the Teutonic knights in Prussia. Their last grand-master was Albert, marquis of Brandenburg, and nephew to Sigismund I. king of Poland. He was elected by the chapter, in hopes that, by his influence with the Polish sovereign, the places which had been lost would be restored to the order: but in this they were disappointed. Albert was so far from consenting to pay homage to his uncle that

that he made preparations for throwing off his dependency, and for recovering all Prussia and Pomerania by force of arms. Being, however defeated in his attempts, he was obliged to resign the dignity of master: in compensation for which, his uncle bestowed on him that part of Prussia, distinguished by the appellation of Ducal, in quality of a secular duke.

It was now the interest of the house of Brandenburg to expel the order. Accordingly, being driven out of Prussia and Pomerania, they transferred their chapter to Mariendal in Franconia. Such was the termination of the Teutonic government in Prussia, where it had ruled with unlimited sway for more than three centuries. At present, the order subsists in several parts both of Germany and Italy, where it has commandaries known under the name of bailiwicks. There are both protestant and catholic commanders, the latter of whom are bound to the performance of daily prayers, and the observance of celibacy. A general chapter of the order nominates the grand-master, who receives his investiture from the emperor. A. D 1531

The house of Brandenburg, whose name is Holenzollern, occupy that throne which themselves erected and consolidated. In 1415, they had the electoral dignity conferred on them. Frederic-William, surnamed the Great Elector, succeeded to the states which had been dismembered, wasted, and enfeebled by his predecessor, and deprived of all resources, either of men or money. This prince seemed formed, by his abilities, vigilance, and activity, to redress the errors of the preceding reign; to be the restorer and defender of his A. D 1640

country; and the glory and honour of his family. He appeared, as if by mistake, to possess the magnanimity of a great potentate with the moderate fortune of an elector. In him Europe beheld a prince, whose actions displayed superior genius and ability, and whose wisdom and valour retrieved the fortunes of his country. Not more than twenty years of age, when he took possession of his father's dominions, he exhibited at that early period marks of prudence and courage, which were invariably conspicuous in every subsequent act of his life. He never exerted his heroic virtue in the service of any base or sinister design; but was constantly employed in defending his territories, or assisting his allies. To the qualifications of prudence and enthusiasm, he added those of industry and humanity. Insensible to the dangerous charms of lawless love, he confined his desires to his wife alone. He was agreeable in society, a pleasing table companion, lively and passionate, but soon appeased. In short, he was kind, magnanimous, charitable, humane, and naturally inclined to virtue. He was the restorer and defender of his country, the founder of its power, and the honour of his age and nation. His virtues acquired him the surname of Great, and he well deserved the epithet.

A. D. 1688. On the death of Frederic-William, his son Frederic I. notwithstanding the wishes and designs of his father, succeeded to the electorate. The constitution of this prince was weak and sickly, and his education had been greatly neglected. Naturally ambitious, but not possessing sufficient vigour to raise himself above his neighbours, who were equally strong and powerful as himself, Frede-

ric attempted to supply this defect by the pomp of titles, and turned his thoughts to the acquisition of the regal dignity. The execution, however, of this project, appeared to the electors council difficult and chimerical, and he was dissuaded from endeavouring to obtain a dignity which would produce only empty honours. But the arguments made use of had not the desired effect; and, at length, this prince found himself surrounded with the externals of royalty. The title of king was granted him by the emperor Leopold, and the ceremony of the coronation was performed in 1701; in memory of which event he instituted the order of the knights of the black eagle.

His wife, Sophia-Charlotte of Hanover, a woman no less distinguished for her literary merit than for the characteristic virtues of her sex, wrote on this occasion to Leibnitz, "Do "not imagine that I prefer this pageantry and "pomp of crowns, which are here so much "esteemed, to the charms of philosophical re-"tirement." This princess introduced into Prussia the spirit of society, true politeness, and a love of the fine arts and sciences. She founded the academy at Berlin, to which she invited many learned men, and, among others, the celebrated Leibnitz. Endeavouring to discover the first principles of things, she embarrassed that metaphysician by her questions: on which he replied, "Madam, it is impossible to "satisfy you: you insist upon knowing the "*why and the wherefore.*" During her last illness, they wished to introduce into her apartment a minister of her own religion; whose attendance, however, she refused. Being pressingly urged on the subject, she replied, "Suf-

" fer me to die without any controversy." To one of her ladies of honour, whom she perceived in tears, she said, " Weep not for me: I am now " going to satisfy my curiosity respecting the " principles of things, which Leibnitz has ne- " ver been able to explain to me, respecting " space, infinity, entity, non-entity; and I " am preparing for the king, my husband, the " exhibition of a funeral pomp, in which he " will have an opportunity of displaying all his " ostentation and magnificence."

In effect, she was not mistaken: the king honoured her with splendid obsequies; and the ceremony of a funeral pomp compensated for the loss of a wife, whose death could not have been too much lamented. On account of Frederic's deformity, the queen used to call him her Æsop. If this prince be deserving of praise, it is because he preserved his states in the calm sunshine of peace, while the territories of his neighbours were ravaged by the tempest of war. It has, however, been said of him, that he was great in little matters, and little in great. But he has the misfortune to hold his station, in history, between a father and a son, by whose great and transcendent abilities his merit is eclipsed.

That son was Frederic-William, the second king of Prussia; who ascended the throne at the age of twenty-five, when the famous war of the Spanish succession was drawing to a conclusion, and the peace of Utrecht, which included England, France, Spain, Holland, and most of the princes of Germany, followed soon after. Louis XIV. acknowledged him as king of Prussia, and of the district of Neufchatel; and guaranteed to A. D. 1713.

him the countries of Gueldres and Kessel, in order to indemnify him for the principality of Orange, which he renounced for himself and his descendants. No sooner was peace fully established than the king was entirely occupied by the interior administration of his dominions. The whole of his time was employed in regulating his finances, the police, the courts of justice, and the army; all of which had been shamefully and equally neglected during the preceding reign. Enjoying an active mind in a vigorous body, he condescended to examine with minuteness the most trifling matters. In his private life, he adopted a system exactly the reverse of that pursued by his father; and was no less parsimonious and inimical to ostentation than the other had been enamoured of luxury and expensive show. He abolished all useless expenditures, and that absurd profusion, by means of which his father wasted the resources furnished him by the prosperity of his subjects, and applied them to vain and idle purposes.

In his court, which first experienced the salutary effects of this reformation, he was extremely strict and austere. He retained only a few persons, who appeared to be essential to his dignity, or useful to the state. He reduced his private expences to a very moderate sum, and was wont to say, that a prince ought to spare not only the blood but the property of his subjects. In this respect he might be considered as a philosopher on the throne; and the frugality and austerity which he exercised were worthy of an ancient Roman. Averse to pomp and parade, and the splendour of royalty, he denied himself the common conveniences of life. Thus did the simplicity and frugality of

this prince form a striking contrast to the pride and profusion of Frederic I.

Tired of the humiliations which his father had frequently suffered from the Swedes and Russians, who marched their troops through his dominions with impunity, Frederic-William determined to protect his subjects from the consequences of any future rupture that might happen amongst his neighbours. The mind of this monarch, which was able to penetrate and comprehend the greatest objects, was excited to the formation of those plans, which he afterwards carried into execution, by the observations of two English generals; one of whom asserted that the king of Prussia could not maintain a force of fifteen thousand men, without the assistance of foreign subsidies, whilst the other contended that he was able to support twenty thousand. The prince, who was then young, terminated the dispute by saying, with some warmth, "The king, my father, is able to keep "up a force of thirty thousand men, if he thinks "proper." But Frederic-William, by a due administration of his finances, contrived to maintain fifty thousand troops, during the first year of his reign, without the help of foreign subsidies.

Notwithstanding the peace of Utrecht, which in a great measure allayed the storm that had agitated the western parts of Europe, the war still continued in the north between Charles XII. and the emperor of Russia, and the kings of Poland and Denmark. The advantageous situation of the king of Prussia's dominions, and the number of his troops, occasioned his assistance to be desired by all the belligerent powers. The monarch also foresaw that the recommencement of hostilities, and the vicinity of the scene

of action, would sooner or later compel him to take a part in the war. Menzikoff, who commanded the united Muscovite and Saxon armies, having attacked Pomerania, the Swedish generals thought they could not serve their master more essentially than by delivering this province into the possession of Frederic-William, who was to hold it by sequestration. Accordingly, a body of Prussian troops were immediately marched into Pomerania; and the allies consented to this agreement, on condition that the king should not suffer the Swedes to enter Poland on that side. In order, however, to remove any scruples on the subject, Frederic-William paid the allies four hundred thousand crowns, and bestowed a lordship and a ring of great value on Menzikoff, who, in all probability, would have been ready to sell his master, if the king of Prussia had wished to purchase him. A. D. 1713.

But Charles XII. not only wrote to the Prussian monarch, that he would neither repay the four-hundred thousand crowns nor subscribe to the sequestration, but attacked the isle of Usedom, expelled the Prussians, and made five hundred of them prisoners of war. This proceeding of the Swedish monarch highly exasperated Frederic-William, who, notwithstanding his being deeply affected by the insult, could not refrain from saying, "What! shall a prince, "whom I so much esteem, compel me to be-"come his enemy?" The Prussian monarch immediately declared war against Charles, put himself at the head of his army, and joined the Saxons and Danes with twenty thousand troops. After compelling the king of Sweden to abandon his territories, and to seek refuge in a foreign

reign land, the conquerors divided among them the spoils of the conquered. To the king of Prussia was allotted that part of Pomerania which is situated between the Oder and the Pene, a small river that discharges its waters into the sea at Penamunde: to Sweden was restored the other provinces of Pomerania, which lie between the Pene and the duchy of Mecklenburg; and George I. of England purchased of the king of Denmark the duchies of Bremen and Verden. When, however, the news of the premature death of Charles XII. was told to Frederic-William, he shed tears, and did justice to the great and noble qualities of that prince, whose enemy he had unwillingly become.

Never did the king of Prussia display liberality, except in what concerned his troops. In that instance he was prodigal, and expended considerable sums in forming a regiment of men of gigantic stature: that was the darling object of his passion. "This monarch," says M. De Voltaire, "used to walk from his palace clothed "in an old blue coat, with copper buttons, half "way down his thighs; and when he bought "a new one, these buttons were made to serve "again. It was in this dress that his majesty, "armed with a huge serjeant's cane, marched "forth every day to review his regiment of "giants. These giants were his greatest de-"light, and the things for which he went to "the heaviest expence. The men who stood "in the first rank of this regiment were none "of them less than seven feet high; and he "sent to purchase them from the farther parts "of Europe to the borders of Asia." This prince seems to have scrupled no methods of obtaining

taining men for his purpose; and the Prussian enlisters took several by force out of the electorate of Hanover. This conduct, so violent, and so repugnant to reason, justice, and the law of nations, gave great offence to George II. who had succeeded to the throne of Great Britain, and had nearly occasioned a war between Hanover and Prussia. His Britannic majesty ordered some Prussian subaltern officers and soldiers to be arrested, by way of reprisal for the Hanoverians that had been forcibly enlisted. Both parties published manifestoes, and assembled troops; but, at length, the matter was accommodated, without proceeding to extremities.

If, however, Frederic-William be liable to blame, on account of the inordinate desire he evinced, of having a regiment of men of gigantic stature, he is on the other hand entitled to praise and commendation for having furnished Europe with the example of that strict discipline and watchful superintendance, which provide for all the wants of the soldiery, but at the same time suffer none of their transgressions and delinquencies to pass unpunished.

During the reign of Frederic I. abuses and corruptions were visible in the department of taxes, which were become arbitrary; and every order of the state demanded that they should be regulated and reformed. In order, therefore, to proportion the contributions payable to the government by the owners of land, the ground capable of cultivation was surveyed with great exactness, and an equality of taxes established, according to the nature and value of the soil. But that he might, in some measure, restore to his subjects the money which he received from

them

them, he caused his troops to be distributed through the provinces. That the peasantry also might not be incommoded by the residence of the army, he stationed it in the towns, and occasionally assembled it in the country, for the performance of general evolutions, and likewise for the sake of rendering the manœuvres more familiar and easy to them, by accustoming them to act in concert. As too numerous levies might have enervated the agricultural body, and have proved injurious to the state, the king issued orders, enjoining each captain to recruit as much as possible in the territories of the empire, by which means one-half of the army consisted of foreigners. It must, however, be observed, that in Prussia, as in Switzerland, every male is by birth a soldier.

Prussia and Lithuania, which the plague had desolated, were re-peopled with colonies brought by the king at an immense expence from Switzerland, Swabia, and the Palatinate; and by these means, those provinces, which had for some time been uninhabited, were restored to their pristine rank and condition. Frederic-William also visited every part of his dominions once a year; and in these periodical excursions failed not to encourage industry and promote wealth.

This prince favoured commerce, manufactures, and the arts, and caused by various privileges and bounties a great number of strangers to settle in his dominions, who might instruct his subjects in those branches of knowledge. During his latter years he was afflicted with ill health, which increased the natural violence and irritability of his temper; insomuch that he reproached his physicians in the grossest terms with

with their unskilfulness and impotence, and imputed to their ignorance or wickedness the pain which their prescriptions failed to relieve. These unmerited insults they bore for some time with that submission which is paid to despotic monarchs: at length, however, the celebrated Hoffman was consulted, who, failing like the rest, to give ease to his majesty, was like them treated with injurious language. Conscious of his own merit, this physician replied that he had tried all the remedies which art could supply, or nature admit, and that if his abilities or integrity were doubted, he was willing to leave the kingdom. Unaccustomed to such returns, the king was convinced of his own indecency; and, finding his end approaching, he met death with great fortitude and resolution, and expired in the arms of his son and successor, in the fifty-second year of his age. Previously to his death he had several conferences with the prince-royal on the subject of government, and on these occasions testified great regard for his son, whom he had before treated with much harshness and asperity.

It is said of Frederic-William, by his successor, that he left behind him an army of sixty-six thousand men, whom his great economy enabled him to maintain; his finances increased; the public treasury filled; and all his affairs in the greatest order and regularity. If it may be properly said, that it is to the acorn we are indebted for the shade of the oak, the whole world must allow, that in the labours and wisdom of this prince we are to look for the sources of that prosperity and success, which the house of Brandenburg has since enjoyed.

CHAP. II.

ON the demise of Frederic-William, his son Frederic II. at that time twenty-eight years of age, ascended the throne of Prussia. Though his father was little acquainted with literature or the sciences, and had not given them much countenance or support, the young prince was eager in the acquisition of knowledge, and patronised men of learning and merit. And, though the late king had bestowed little time and attention on the education of his son, the prince-royal discovered a strong and early propensity to literary pursuits, and also a great fondness for music, to which his father had an extreme aversion. A. D. 1740.

Though the territories of the princes of the house of Brandenburg, as well as their power, had been gradually and greatly augmented, the extent of the dominions of Frederic II. were inadequate to his wishes, and unsuitable to the views of his ambition. His father, had left him a numerous and well-disciplined army, and immense sums in his treasury; and it was soon apparent that he was determined to use his utmost efforts for enlarging his dominions, without being in the least scrupulous by what means these acquisitions should be obtained.

A. D. 1740. This was first manifested in his conduct towards the bishop of Liege, whom he expelled from certain districts, which the former had held for more than a century, and to the possession of which the king of Prussia could have no well-founded claim. The bishop,

not yielding readily to his wishes, Frederic immediately dispatched a body of troops into the contested districts, where they lived without controul, and exercised all kinds of military tyranny. This produced the desired effect; and the sufferings of the inhabitants induced the bishop to relinquish his claim to those territories.

No sooner was the death of the emperor, Charles VI. the last male heir of the house of Austria, made known to the king of Prussia, than he considered this circumstance as favourable to his ambition and views of aggrandizement. It soon appeared that he intended to take advantage of the embarrassed state of the queen of Hungary's affairs, to revive some claims to his family to the duchy of Silesia, by virtue of old treaties, which, however, had been annulled, or rendered obsolete. He did not at first fully avow his intentions; but declared that he had thought proper to cause his troops to enter Silesia, in order to cover it from being invaded or attacked; and the rather because that duchy served as a barrier to his dominions, whither the flames of war, which now threatened Europe, might be extended, and expose them to evident danger.

It was in the middle of December that Frederic marched into Silesia, at the head of thirty-thousand men. On mounting his horse, he is reported to have said to the marquis de Beauveau, the French minister, "I believe I am going to play your game for you; if the aces turn up, we will divide." But, notwithstanding the friendly and pacific views with which the king of Prussia professed to enter Silesia, he soon levied heavy contribu- A.D. 1740.

tions on the inhabitants, under pretence of subsisting his troops, who also occasioned great damage to the country. The Silesians, not possessing a force sufficient to oppose the Prussians were compelled to submit.

In the mean time, Frederic's ministers at the court of Vienna were directed to enter into a negociation with Maria Theresa, and to represent to that princess, that the king of Prussia was ready to guaranty all the German dominions of the house of Austria; that, with a view of securing their possessions to that house, he would conclude a treaty with Austria, Russia, and the maritime powers; that he would use his utmost endeavours to procure the elevation of the queen of Hungary's husband, the grand-duke of Tuscany, to the imperial throne; and that, in order to enable her majesty successfully to oppose her enemies, he would immediately advance to her, in ready money, two millions of florins. For the performance of these important services, this disinterested monarch only required, as well on account of his right, as for a compensation for the dangers to which he should expose himself in promoting the safety and glory of the house of Austria, that Silesia should be ceded to him by treaty. His ministers, however, were directed to make known, that though he had demanded the entire cession of the whole province, he might, perhaps, be satisfied with some particular districts of Silesia, provided the queen of Hungary would make a reasonable accommodation for their mutual interests and advantage.

But Maria Theresa refusing to dismember any part of her dominions, and finding that he could gain nothing by negociation, Frederic continued

to

to prosecute his claim by force of arms. He advanced farther into Silesia; released the people from the rents and services which they had been accustomed to pay to the clergy; plundered the convents of their stores of provisions; and when the heads of those communities complained, he told them he had never read in the scriptures, that magazines were erected by the apostles, whose example their profession obliged them to imitate.

Though the inhabitants of Silesia were at first wholly unprepared for opposing and resisting this powerful invader, the Austrian troops began by degrees to assemble, and to withstand the progress of the Prussian arms. The king sent a detachment from the main army, which was now considerably increased, to obtain possession of Iablunka, a town that had a castle built on a rock, and was situated on the frontiers of Hungary, on which side it was reckoned the key of Silesia. The garrison made a vigorous and resolute defence; but were at length obliged to capitulate. The Prussians also, at the same time, besieged Glogau, a large and well fortified city on the confines of Poland. But being under the necessity of converting the siege into a blockade, the king commanded a sudden and unexpected attack to be made upon the place. This was accordingly executed, and produced the desired effect; and the Prussians about an hour after midnight became masters of the city. So great was the consternation of the Austrians on this occasion, that an incident is related which seems scarcely worthy of belief. Four Prussian grenadiers having climbed the ramparts, which surrounded the town, missed their company, and met an Austrian captain and fifty

fifty-two men, whom they commanded to lay down their arms, and to surrender themselves prisoners of war. In the terror of darkness and confusion, the fears of the Austrians multiplied their enemies, and the Prussians were unexpectedly obeyed.

The campaign of 1744 was, however, extremely mortifying to Frederic, who returned to Berlin; but he did not long remain inactive in his capital: he marched an army of seventy thousand men into Silesia, which was also about to be entered by prince Charles of Lorraine, and the duke of Saxe-Weissenfels, at the head of eighty thousand. The Austrian general intended to penetrate into Silesia through the narrow passes of the mountains; and the king of Prussia designed to suffer them to march through those defiles without disturbance, and then attack them suddenly and unexpectedly. Accordingly, the Austrian troops had no sooner arrived in the plains near Hohen Friedberg, than they were engaged by the whole Prussian army in order of battle. The contest was extremely dreadful and sanguinary. Never did the fire of the Prussian infantry cease for a moment, till nine o'clock in the morning, when the action had continued near seven hours, and when the whole combined army of Austrians and Saxons were entirely defeated, and obliged to retreat through the passes of the mountains from which they had issued. Prince Charles and the duke of Saxe-Weissenfels conducted their retreat in an able and skilful manner; but the victory obtained by the Prussian monarch was great and indisputable. Frederic's behaviour on the day of this memorable engagement was entitled to the highest

A. D. 1745.

comment

commendation. The situation of his affairs, relative to his own forces, as well as to those of the enemy, seemed to demand a decisive action. In order, therefore, to bring matters to this issue, he had pretended to be afraid of the superiority of the combined army, and had caused a report to be circulated that he should wait for them in another place. In conformity to these affected appearances, he had evacuated the mountains of Upper Silesia and the country of Glatz, and remained closely covered in his camp. Prince Charles was deceived by these measures, and descended into the plain, and the event proved the wisdom of the plan. In this battle, Frederic displayed the greatest bravery and military skill; and, having driven his enemies out of Silesia, he entered the kingdom of Bohemia.

But though the Austrians and Saxons had been completely defeated, they were still in considerable force, and made a forced march in order to surprize and attack the king of Prussia in his camp near the village of Sohr. Frederic, having received some intimation of the design of prince Charles, intended to change the position of his camp: but in the morning of the day, on which the army was to have decamped, the troops of the enemy were seen advancing in several columns. The right wing of the Prussians was first engaged, and succeeded in driving the left of the Austrians from an eminence which they occupied. The front of the two armies insensibly engaged; and, though the Austrians were advantageously posted, and fought with great bravery and resolution, they were finally defeated; and the victory was complete on the side of the Prussians. The Austrians were ordered to retreat two leagues from the

the field of battle; five thousand of them were killed and wounded; and two thousand made prisoners; and the Prussians took many standards and twenty pieces of cannon. Having regulated the winter quarters of his troops, Frederic returned to Berlin, and left the command of the army to field-mareschal prince Leopold.

Being informed that the enemy did not intend to canton their troops during the winter, the king returned into Silesia, and, entering Saxony, attacked and defeated a body of forces near the village of Hennersdorff. The Austrian army, without coming to a general engagement, retreated before the Prussians into Bohemia. In the mean time, another detachment of Prussian forces, under the command of the prince of Anhalt Dessau, made themselves masters of the city of Leipsic; and, attacking the combined Austrian and Saxon army near Kesseldorff, obtained a decisive and complete victory. The king of Prussia himself, with the troops with which he had driven the Austrians into Bohemia, arrived in the neighbourhood of Kesseldorff, two days after this engagement. He immediately proceeded to the city of Dresden, which he summoned to surrender. Before the arrival of Frederic, the king of Poland, elector of Saxony, had withdrawn from his capital, and retired to Prague. Dresden

A. D. 1745. surrendered by capitulation; and a treaty of peace was concluded between the kings of Prussia and Poland, in which the court of Vienna was comprehended. After the peace of Dresden, the Prussian troops evacuated Saxony, and Frederic returned immediately to Berlin, where he was received by his subjects with loud acclamations.

After

After the king's return to his capital, he found himself at leisure to attend to civil regulations in his dominions, and to the promotion of commerce, literature, sciences, and the arts. He also endeavoured to introduce a great reform into the courts of justice, and in the forms and expence of legal proceedings. For this purpose, he wrote and published "The Frederician Code; or, a Body of Law for the dominions of the king of Prussia, founded on reason and the constitutions of the country." Soon after his accession to the throne, Frederic had printed his "Anti-Machiavel," in refutation of the doctrines of Machiavel; though our readers must have seen, that the principles of the king of Prussia were not always at variance with those of that politician. Having been attentive to the history of his own family, and his own country, he was induced, from a desire of obtaining accurate information on the subject, to compose his "Memoirs of the house of Brandenburg," which were dedicated to the prince-royal of Prussia. In this dedication, Frederic says, "I have treated the subject with "freedom and impartiality, so as to exhibit the "princes of your house in real colours. The "same pen, which has drawn the civil and mi- "litary virtues of the great elector, has glanced "at the foibles of the first king of Prussia, and "those passions, which, in the order of Provi- "dence, contributed afterwards to raise this "house to its present pitch of grandeur. I "have divested myself of all manner of pre- "judice, and considered princes, kings, rela- "tions, only as ordinary men. Far from being "biassed by the weight of power, or from ido- "lizing my ancestors, I have freely condemned "their

A. D. 1747

" their vices, because vice should find no pa-
" tronage on the throne. I have praised virtue
" wherever I have found it, but at the same
" time have guarded against that enthusiasm
" which it naturally inspires; to the end that
" nothing but truth, in her plain and native
" dress, should reign throughout this history."
These memoirs contain much curious and valuable information, and are written with perspicuity, spirit, and vivacity; but misrepresentations occasionally occur, and there are some very exceptionable passages.

It was about this time also that the king of Prussia wrote his " Poem on the Art of War," in six books, which is his largest poetical production. This work contains many sound and important principles of the military art, and is adorned with the graces of poetry. But it seems a circumstance somewhat curious and singular, that in a poem on this subject, in which he has celebrated so many ancient and modern generals, and in which he has repeatedly bestowed very high encomiums on prince Eugene, and even mentioned the battle of Blenheim, he should, with the most extreme caution, have avoided making the least mention of our illustrious countryman, John duke of Marlborough. " It is not to be sup-
" posed," sarcastically observes the Monthly Review, " that this silence, with respect to
" Marlborough, proceeded from invidious mo-
" tives; we rather think that his Prussian ma-
" jesty considered *him* as a general who under-
" stood *only part of his profession*, having never
" given any proof of his skill *in conducting a*
" *retreat*."

The numerous army which the king of Prus-

sia

sia maintained, the indefatigable diligence with which he exercised his troops, his enterprizing spirit, and the manner in which he had wrested Silesia from the house of Austria, naturally excited the jealousy and apprehension of the neighbouring states. Even the most potent princes thought it necessary to guard against his designs; whilst those of inferior power could not consider themselves as safe near such a monarch. Accordingly the courts of Russia and Vienna concluded a treaty of defensive alliance, to which the elector of Saxony was invited to accede. In this treaty were several private articles, which were particularly intended against the king of Prussia, who had also formed an alliance with the king of England. To the convention concluded at Petersburgh the French court acceded.

A. D. 1756.

Frederic, who was not unacquainted with the confederacy which had been formed against him, in case of his giving rise to a new war, demanded of the empress-queen the intention of those armaments and warlike preparations, which were making in her dominions, and whether they did not concern him. But receiving what he considered an equivocal answer to this demand, he determined immediately to commence hostilities; and thereby involved himself in a long and most hazardous war, in the course of which he acquired a high degree of military fame, but which occasioned a great effusion of human blood, and was productive of much calamity to the Prussian dominions, as well as to the neighbouring countries.

After various turns of fortune, the situation of Frederic became so extremely critical, and his enemies so numerous and formidable, that he

he resolved at all events to hazard an engagement with the main army of the Austrians; though they were so much superior in number, and so strongly encamped, that an attempt of this nature seemed highly dangerous and imprudent. He informed his troops that he was about to lead them to a most arduous and desperate undertaking; that his affairs required it, and that he was determined to conquer, or die in the engagement. They replied, with ardour and enthusiasm, that they would conquer or die with him. The Prussians commenced the battle with the most desperate animosity; but were repulsed with great loss. At length, after many unsuccessful attempts, they succeeded in throwing the Austrians into disorder, and the defeat of the enemy was facilitated by mareschal Daun receiving so dangerous a wound in the thigh, that he was obliged to be carried off the field of battle. This engagement, which was denominated the battle of Torgau, was long and ably contested. The king, as usual, exposed his person in the most dangerous parts of the action, and was slightly wounded upon the breast by a musket-ball.

Though the king of Prussia, during the long and sanguinary war in which he was engaged, had exhibited the greatest courage and military skill, obtained the most splendid victories, and made exertions so extraordinary that they seemed almost miraculous, he became sensible that the longer hostilities continued the more his difficulties increased. His army was not composed of the same troops as those with which he commenced hostilities: he had lost vast numbers of his men, not only in action but by diseases, by the rigour of the seasons, and by perpetual

perpetual hardships and fatigues. He was, therefore, induced, during the course of the present year, to act chiefly on the defensive. The Austrians took Schweidnitz by a coup de main. Colberg also fell into the hands of the Russians; and the garrison, who had defended the town with great bravery, were made prisoners of war.

A. D. 1761.

But an event took place which was highly favourable to the affairs of the king of Prussia. This was the death of the empress of Russia, who was succeeded by her nephew, Peter III. This prince professed the highest admiration for the great qualities of Frederic; and expressed the strongest desire that a general peace might immediately take place. Accordingly a suspension of hostilities was concluded between the emperor of Russia and the king of Prussia; and the new czar agreed to join his troops to those of Frederic, in order to act against those powers who were enemies to the Prussian monarch. But before these forces could be of any service to the king of Prussia, Peter III. was deposed, and Catharine II. his successor, declared that though she was resolved to observe inviolably the peace which had been concluded during the preceding reign, she had thought proper to withdraw her troops from Silesia, Prussia, and Pomerania. Before, however, the Russians quitted his army, Frederic attacked and defeated the Austrians, and gained a very important victory. Prince Henry also, the king's brother, who had for a long time acted on the defensive, at length manœuvred with so much skill that the Austrian commander suffered himself to be drawn into a situation, where he was attacked by the Prussian general, near Freyberg,

berg, and totally defeated. In this action the Prussians took five thousand prisoners, and thirty pieces of cannon.

This victory tended to facilitate a peace, which was concluded between the empress-queen and the king of Prussia, at the castle of Hubertsburg, near Dresden. The king of Poland also signed a treaty of pacification with the Prussian monarch; and that unfortunate prince was again restored to his electoral dominions. But he received no indemnification for the usurpation of his territories, or for the numerous depredations, and acts of violence, injustice, and cruelty, which had been committed upon his subjects. The empress-queen and the king of Prussia renounced all claims on each other's dominions or territories. A. D. 1763.

Thus terminated what has been called the seven year's war, between the Prussian monarch, and the great and powerful princes, with whom he had engaged in hostilities. It was one of the most sanguinary contests, by which the world has been desolated; and in which the exertions and opposition of Frederic against such a confederacy of potentates, and such numerous armies, was a just subject of universal astonishment and applause. But the military fame he thereby acquired was a trifling compensation to his subjects, for the evils and calamities they had suffered, and for the great effusion of human blood, which had been produced by his ambition, and by that jealousy which his numerous standing army, and his conduct towards his neighbours, had naturally and universally inspired. Peace being now completely established, Frederic returned to his capital,

capital, from which he had been absent more than six years.

The king of Prussia, for some time subsequent to this period, cultivated the arts of peace, without neglecting at the same time those of war. He concurred in exerting his interest to promote the election of count Stanislaus Poniatowski to the throne of Poland, in the room of Augustus III. who died soon after his restoration to his electoral dominions. Frederic received a visit from the emperor of Germany, at Neiss at Silesia; where they treated each other in a cordial and friendly manner, spent two nights and a day together, and had more than one private interview. They parted with the strongest professions of mutual regard, esteem, and confidence. They dined together in company with some general officers, among whom was Laudohn, who had greatly distinguished himself against the king of Prussia in the late war, and who was going to place himself at the lower end of the table; but Frederic cried out, "I must beg, "general Laudohn, that you will do me the "favour to come and sit by me. I am much "better pleased to have you on my side, than "opposite to me." The king of Prussia, the year following, paid a visit to the emperor, in his turn, at Neustadt in Moravia.

A. D. 1764.

A. D. 1769.

On the twenty-ninth of September, a body of Prussian troops made a sudden irruption into the territories of Dantzick, where they surprized several of the out-posts, seized the cannon, and made the men prisoners. Being afterwards reinforced to the number of five thousand, they encamped about four miles from the city, where they continued for some

A. D. 1770.

weeks, but observed the greatest discipline and regularity. The pretence for this invasion was, that the magistrates had forbidden the Prussian officers to levy men within their free city; and that the post-master had refused to pass without examination some casks of silver, which came for the Prussian resident. It was remarked that the complaint founded on the last of these clauses was the more groundless, as the post-office did not belong to the magistrates, but to the king of Poland. The inhabitants of Dantzick, having secured their gates, applied to all the foreign ministers, and solicited the protection or intercession of their respective courts. But no effectual interposition being made in their behalf, the city was obliged to pay seventy-five thousand ducats, subscribe to certain conditions, and make a submission to his Prussian majesty.

Frederic now appeared so much determined to increase the population of his dominions that he adopted very extraordinary methods for that purpose. His troops entered into Great Poland, and carried off from that province, and the neighbourhood, upwards of twelve thousand families. He also published an edict, commanding every person, under the severest penalties, to take in payment for forage, provisions, corn, and horses, the money offered by his troops and commissaries. This money was either silver, bearing the impression of Poland, and worth exactly one-third of its nominal value; or ducats, struck in imitation of those of the Dutch, but seventeen per cent. inferior to the real ducats of Holland. With this base and adulterated coin, he bought up corn and forage sufficient for supplying his army two years, and stocked

A. D. 1771.

stocked magazines in the country, to which the inhabitants were obliged to go and re-purchase, at an advanced price, and with good money, what they had before sold. By this honest and masterly manœuvre, it is said that the king of Prussia gained atleast seven millions of dollars!

Besides these flagrant and unjustifiable actions, of which Frederic was at this time guilty, he had also a great share, and is said to have been the prime mover, in the partition of Poland. Seldom has there appeared in the history of mankind a greater act of injustice, oppression, and tyranny. With respect to the king of Prussia, the partition was a measure perfectly suitable to the favourite object of his ambition, the aggrandizement of his dominions; and when this was the point in view, justice and injustice were with him matters of little or no consideration. It has been asserted by count Hertzberg, that of these claims, that of the king of Prussia was best founded. Of three such claims, it may be difficult to determine which was the most iniquitous. Certain, it is, that none of the claims had the least foundation in justice, truth, or reason. They originated in unprincipled ambition, and were enforced in a manner that ought never to be spoken of but in terms of indignation, while the least sense of virtue or vice shall remain among mankind.

In the letters patent which Frederic had published, relative to the districts he had seized in Poland, the cities of Dantzick and Thorn were particularly excepted from his claims. But the territories of the former were soon after seized, under pretence of their having formerly constituted a part of Polish Prussia. Upon the same pretext, he occupied A. D. 1772.

the little island of Holm, two peninsulas that run into the harbour, the suburbs called Scheidlitz and Scharpau, and the district of Nekring. By these and other seizures, he effectually commanded the city, and became master of all the heights around it, and of its gates, works, and harbour. Being possessed also of the sea-coast, he erected a custom-house, and imposed insupportable duties on all goods, whether exports or imports. The masters and owners of vessels having refused to pay this arbitrary tribute, thirty-five of their ships were stopped at once. The foreign ministers and consuls applied for redress, but in vain. All business and commerce were at a stand, till the merchants complied with the demands made upon them, which however unjust, they had no power to oppose. The English, who had always enjoyed great privileges at Dantzick, had these privileges repeatedly confirmed to them by treaty, experienced on this occasion great violence and injustice from the king of Prussia. His conduct with respect to that city was afterwards highly unjust and tyrannical.

Thorn also was treated by Frederic in a manner similar to that of Dantzick. He imposed a variety of new and arbitrary regulations on the inhabitants of the usurped provinces; and the Jews were obliged, by the severe treatment they experienced, to quit the districts that had been seized by the Prussians and the Austrians, and to retire into the provinces possessed by the Russians. To the Jesuits, in other parts of his dominions, the king was at this period more favourable; and though the pope had abolished the order, he afforded them an asylum in the Prussian territories.

The

A. D. 1778. The death of Maximilian Joseph, elector of Bavaria, gave rise to a new contest between the Prussian monarch and the court of Vienna. In him was extinguished the Ludovician line of Bavaria, which had possessed that duchy for nearly five hundred years. He was succeeded, both in that dignity and in his dominions at large, by his general heir, Charles Theodore, the elector palatine of the Rhine. This prince was in the forty-fourth year of his age, and having no issue, the large possessions of the double electorate, with the dignity appertaining, were in the expectation of the duke of Deuxponts, who was the nearest relation on the male side.

Scarcely had Charles Theodore arrived in his new capital of Munich, before the Austrian troops, who had evidently been stationed on the frontiers for that purpose, and had only waited for an account of the late elector's death, poured on all sides into Lower Bavaria. Another strong body also advanced on the side of Egru to the Upper Palatinate, where the regency pleaded in vain the laws of the empire, and the rights of sovereignty, against the entrance of foreign troops. The claim of the empress queen to a great part of the electorate of Bavaria was founded on obsolete titles of more than three hundred years standing, and which appear to have been very ill-grounded. But, however defective the Austrian claim might be in reason or justice, it was supported by an army of sixty thousand men. The new elector, therefore, incapable of opposing so great a force, and unwilling to engage in a war on the decline of life, concluded a treaty with the court of Vienna, by which, in order to keep part of his possessions

sions in Bavaria, he gave up more than half of them. This arrangement naturally gave great umbrage to the duke of Deuxponts, who formally protested against the convention, and called upon the several princes and states that compose the diet of the empire, both in their original character, and as guarantees of the treaty of Westphalia, to interfere in the preservation of his just rights.

The king of Prussia thought proper to enter into the contest; and as he had now no common interest to tolerate acts of injustice in favour of the house of Austria, he undertook the support of the duke of Deuxponts, and the defence of the rights of the Germanic body. Various public acts and memorials were published on this occasion, by the empress-queen and the king of Prussia; and several efforts were made to effect an amicable accommodation. But the court of Vienna behaved with great haughtiness, and these efforts were unsuccessful.

The emperor commanded the Austrian army in person; and when Frederic quitted Berlin, he sent the following note to one of his principal ministers: "You will find money enough "in the treasury for the public supplies. I trust "in God that I shall soon return, as I am only "going on a short excursion, to teach a young "gentleman his military exercise." The campaign, however, was extended to a greater length than the king expected; for though the emperor had not had much experience in the art of war, he was assisted by general Laudohn, and other able officers. Both armies were very numerous and formidable.

The Prussian monarch passed through Silesia, and having penetrated the mountains of Bohemia,

mia, seized the city, castle, and magazines of Nachod, where he fixed his head-quarters, and waited the arrival of his heavy artillery and stores. The emperor, in the mean time, had taken an advantageous post at Koningsgratz, where his forces were very strongly encamped. These great armies made several movements; but no action of consequence took place. A treaty of peace was at length concluded at Teschen, by which the court of Vienna renounced all its pretensions to Bavaria, excepting only the district of Burghausen, for which it agreed to pay six millions of florins to the elector of Saxony. The late convention also was totally annulled, and satisfaction was to be made to the duke of Deuxponts. A. D. 1779.

The Prussian minister at the Hague presented a memorial to the States-general, in which it was requested, in the name of his Prussian majesty, that they would take such measures as might effectually put an end to the persecutions that were then carried on against the stadtholder, and that they would maintain him in the enjoyment of those prerogatives, which, it was said, were the rightful attributes of his person and family A. D. 1783.

The emperor formed a scheme to prevail on the elector palatine, by the offer of a crown, to agree to an exchange of the duchy of Bavaria for the Austrian Netherlands which were to be constituted a kingdom under the revived denomination of Austrasia. But this project, to which the elector palatine seemed inclined to agree, was strongly opposed by the king of Prussia, who entirely prevented it, by proposing what is called the Germanic union, by which many of the electors, and most considerable A. D. 1785.

derable princes of the empire, agreed to unite, in order to preserve inviolate, the present system and constitution of Germany.

Frederic had now attained to the age of seventy-four years, and was in full possession of those uncommon powers of understanding, by which he had been always distinguished. His body, however, was not equally vigorous with his mind. In general he had enjoyed good health, though he had several times been afflicted with the gout; but the disorders of his body now began to increase, and he was extremely dropsical, without being sensible that he was afflicted with that disorder. But he continued to apply himself to the public business with his usual care and assiduity. Count Hertzberg informs us, that "he employed the same indefatigable attention to the internal government of his kingdom, and to the management of his affairs, during the last seven months of his life, as he had done formerly, and with the same success, notwithstanding the painful malady, with which he was all that time afflicted."—"Notwithstanding his desperate situation, he did not remit for a moment his practice of reading all the dispatches of his foreign ministers, or of dictating every morning, from four till seven, the answers that were to be sent immediately to those dispatches, and maintaining a regular correspondence with the ministers of his cabinet, and those for foreign affairs, on all great political concerns. His usual course of life was invariably continued till the fifteenth of August, on which day he dictated and signed his dispatches, in a manner that would have done honour to a minister the most conversant

A. D. 1786.

in

" in the routine of business. It was not till the " sixteenth of August that he ceased to dis- " charge the great functions of a king, and of a " minister of state, on which day he was deprived " of nearly of sense; and on the morning of the " seventeenth he exhaled his mighty soul in my " presence, and in that of the respectable physi- " cian, Dr Selle, without any convulsive motion."

Thus died, in the seventy-fifth year of his age, and the forty-seventh of his reign, Frederic II. deservedly surnamed the Great. He was in his person below the middle stature; but his limbs were well formed, and he possessed a healthful and vigorous constitution. His intellectual powers were very great; and when we consider his situation, and the little care that had been taken of his education, we must acknowledge that his literary acquisitions were considerable. He had much general knowledge of the sciences, and was well conversant with French writers on polite literature. He is, however, said to have been very imperfectly acquainted with the Latin language; and he derived his knowledge of the great authors of antiquity, both Greek and Roman, chiefly through the medium of French translations. His character and conduct were extremely various, and at different times appeared in different points of view. His predominant passion was the love of glory, which led him to commit those actions that would extend his fame, and excite the attention of mankind, rather than those which were dictated by virtue and humanity. He wished to unite in his own person the reputation of a great king, a wise legislator, an illustrious hero, an accomplished general, a fine poet, and an enlightened philosopher. But, though he loved

fame

lame more than virtue, and was more solicitous to extend his reputation, and to enlarge his dominions and his power, than to regulate his conduct by the principles of justice and humanity, he was desirous of the praise of virtue, even when his actions were distinctly adverse to its clearest dictates.

Active, enterprising, indefatigable, and intrepid, he continually alarmed his neighbours; and their apprehensions were increased by his appearing scarcely to scruple any means, which might effect his purpose. On the conduct of his affairs, he exhibited the most unremitting vigilance, the most unwearied industry, and the keenest sagacity in seizing those decisive moments which seemed favourable for promoting his views and designs. He always displayed the highest degree of courage, astonishing presence of mind, and the greatest magnanimity, at periods and in situations of uncommon difficulty and danger. There were no difficulties, no fatigues, no dangers, sufficient to deter him from the prosecution of those schemes, to which he was prompted by ambition and the love of fame. He was, perhaps, the most laborious and indefatigable prince that ever existed, with respect to the attention he paid to the army, the government, and the general concerns of his kingdom. Every department of administration was under his own immediate inspection; and the most minute particulars of national domestic policy did not escape his observation. And though many faults and blemishes appear in his character, perhaps no other prince in the world devoted so much of his time and attention, as Frederic did during the last twenty years of his life, in promoting the happiness of his subjects, and the

general prosperity of his dominions, so far as was consistent with his mode of government, and with the maintenance of his own power and authority.

In judging of the character of Frederic, we ought to consider that he was born heir to a despotic monarchy, and trained up from his infancy in military and arbitrary ideas. It seems, however, highly probable, that with his taste for literature, and his distinguished talents, he would have been a better man, and a better king, had he not early imbibed the pernicious scepticism of Voltaire. In the former part of his life, he wrote against the principles of Machiavel, and, nevertheless adopted much Machiavelian policy, and his conduct not unfrequently appeared to be more characterized by craft and subtilty, than by generosity and true dignity of mind. His treatment of baron Trenck, and of the inhabitants of Saxony, with other instances which might be mentioned, afford ample proof that he could occasionally be guilty of great and flagrant acts of cruelty.

If we consider him as a general, we shall find that his talents were of the very highest order. The rapidity of his marches, his skill in the art of encampment, the dexterity of his manœuvres, the fertility of his expedients, his extensive knowledge of military science, and the promptitude with which he availed himself, even in the heat of action, of every circumstance that could contribute to his advantage, all conspired to render him eminently distinguished. In some instances, he was chargeable with rashness; but it was when he had some great and important object in view for the promotion of his general designs; and in such cases, he sacrificed the lives of his men with a readiness that reflects no

honour on his character. It seems probable that, had not France and Russia combined against him, he would have totally crushed the house of Austria, and overturned the whole Germanic system.

Though naturally and generally parsimonious, he sometimes displayed magnificence and liberality. To his domestics he was also kind, if they properly discharged the duties of their stations; and he manifested great attachment to some of his generals, and others, whom he considered as deserving his friendship and esteem. Fond of music in his youth, the love of it accompanied him through life; and, except when the circumstances of war, or other affairs of importance, rendered it impracticable, he attended his concerts with almost as much uniformity and exactness, as his military reviews. Even in the camp, he had the ablest of his performers; and, during his most active and busy campaigns, he devoted some portion of his time to music and the pursuits of literature. Notwithstanding the many faults and blemishes in his character, he was undoubtedly a great king, and possessed of very splendid talents; and certainly one of the most distinguished and extraordinary princes, of whom the records of history have preserved any memorial.

A. D. 1786. Frederic William II. nephew of the late monarch, ascended the throne at the age of forty-two. This prince, who had been too much depressed by the severity of his uncle, no sooner obtained the sovereignty than he thought only of enjoying, with transport, all the pleasures which had been forbidden him. It was believed that his reign would be as glorious as that of Frederic III. and be rendered more mild and peaceable. His first employ-

ments were the reformation of abuses, acts of justice, and favours conferred with discernment. He travelled over several provinces, confirmed or restored privileges, liberally bestowed succours, diminished taxes, and flattered the national vanity by manifesting his taste for German literature. He discovered the laudable intention of rendering justice more impartial, more expeditious, and less expensive. The same principle of order, mildness, and equity, induced him to publish two edicts for the liberty of the press, and that of the conscience; but his intention on these points was too adverse to passion and prejudice to be successful; and the two documents were adapted to a construction directly contrary to the end which the king seemed desirous of attaining. In a word, all his intentions, and the whole of his conduct, at the commencement of his reign, were mild, wise, and beneficent. But, alas! a total abandonment, a shameful carelessness, and an unbounded weakness, obscenity in pleasures, intrigue in council, prodigality in expences, blindness in choice, the most superstitious credulity, the most puerile vanity, joined to the most evident incapacity, soon assumed the place of that activity, justice and wisdom, which, in the first ebullition of fervour, the new monarch had been induced to display. The zeal of Frederic William cooled almost as fast as the body of his illustrious predecessor; and it was not long before Prussia perceived the immense void, left by this immortal shade.

Frederic William took an active part in the affairs of Holland; and when his sister, the princess of Orange, was stopped on her journey to the Hague, he threatened the United States with war, and ordered twenty A. D. 1787.

thousand men to march into Westphalia, under the command of the duke of Brunswick. That general, sensible that the celerity of his expedition would ensure its success, and that the more boldness he displayed the less opposition he had to expect from the weakness of his enemies, advanced with rapidity into Holland. The first towns that he attacked opened their gates at the first summons; and he entered Utrecht and the Hague without encountering any obstacle. Amsterdam alone made a vigorous resistance to the Prussians; but was at length obliged to capitulate; and, in less than twenty days, the United Provinces submitted to the Prussian arms. The stadtholder recovered all the power of which he had been deprived; and Prussia astonished Europe by her influence and authority.

The Prussian monarch, irritated by the misfortunes of Louis XVI. and alarmed by jacobin declamations against thrones, resolved on a war with France. He was not at first excited to this grand contest by any interested motives; but generously took up arms in favour of the French king, whose power he wished to restore. Accordingly, the court of Berlin having published a manifesto, in which were stated the rights of the German princes, the danger of the propagation of revolutionary principles, and the aggression of the French, who had declared war against the king of Hungary and Bohemia, Frederic William marched an army of fifty thousand men to Coblentz, where he was received by the emigrants from France as the saviour of their country. The duke of Brunswick, who had been appointed general of the armies of the coalition, published a manifesto, which gave universal disgust in

A. D. 1762.

France,

France; and in which, after announcing that he came to restore the throne and the altar, and to destroy anarchy, he declared that he would punish as rebels all the French that should defend their country, render them responsible for the outrages of the jacobins against their king, put the citizens to death, and pillage all the towns and villages, in case of resistance or disorder.

Frederic William, encountering no obstacle, advanced with rapidity; and Longwy and Verdun submitted to the invaders. But, having arrived in Champagne, the king found himself in a sterile country, his army without provisions, fatigued by continual rains, and wasted by a contagious malady, which destroyed or disabled nearly twenty thousand men. These considerations induced the Prussian monarch to think of retreating; but it seems probable, from the character of Frederic William, and the humane and exalted mind of the duke of Brunswick, that the hope of saving Louis XVI. by evacuating the French territories, more than any other motive, determined them to sacrifice their glory. Accordingly, the king commenced a retreat, which was equally unexpected and disgraceful.

It would appear that Frederic William, by a secret convention with Dumouriez, the French general, had engaged to withdraw from the coalition, and to desist from hostilities, provided the French limited their operations to the invasion of the Austrian Netherlands, and did not penetrate into the empire. Seeing, however, that the government of France did not ratify this treaty, but pursued its conquests in Germany, the king re-united with the coalition, and prepared for a second campaign against the forces of France. Accordingly, he attacked

and

A. D. 1793. and defeated Custine, retook Frankfort, and terminated this campaign by the recapture of Mentz.

But Frederic William, sensible of the exhaustion of his treasury, which the war had ruined, desirous of employing himself without interruption in the affairs of Poland, and of restraining in that country the rival ambition of Catharine, and dreading the revolutionary spirit of the French should spread among his troops, he entertained thoughts of again seceding from the coalition. England, however, concluded a treaty of subsidy with the king, in order to facilitate to him the means of acting with vigour, and conformably to the zeal and interest with which he was animated for the common cause.

A. D. 1795. But at length the versatility of his character, and the ill success of the coalition, induced Frederic-William to abandon his ally the emperor, England, by whom he was subsidized, and even his brother-in-law, the prince of Orange. He negociated with France a suspension of arms; and, at length concluded with that republic a treaty of peace, and contented himself with securing the tranquillity of the northern part of the empire, whose limits he traced, and whose neutrality he guaranteed.

About this time, Frederic-William II. disappeared from the political scene of Europe. The expences of the war, the declining state of the king's health, his profusion, and his mistresses, had greatly deranged the finances. His infirmities daily increased his indifference to the storms by which he was surrounded; the *illuminati* amused him with deceitful promises, in the hope of recovering that health which excess of pleasure had irrecoverably destroyed; at length,

length the dropsy made its appearance, and he died on the 17th of November, regretted only by his family, and a few friends, A. D. 1797.

The intrigues of this monarch had exposed Sweden and Turkey to a ruinous war; his protection had destroyed Poland: the first to form the coalition against France, he was the first to abandon it. The Stadtholder might reproach him with the loss of his power, and Brabant with that of her liberty. His defects had diminished the lustre shed by his predecessor over the Prussian arms; and his abortive enterprizes, and the avidity of his mistresses, had dissipated the treasures of Frederic the Great.

On the decease of Frederic-William II. his son Frederic-William III. ascended the throne of Prussia; and, soon after his accession, arrested those persons who had imposed on the weakness of the late king to enrich themselves. The justice which he exercised towards them, his choice of ministers, and the example which he set of a regular life, inspired just confidence in his subjects, to whom these augured a happier reign. He was, however, obliged to exert the most unremitting prudence, and to observe the strictest economy, in order to repair the faults of his father, and to restore to Prussia her real importance and prosperity. He endeavoured rather to restore tranquillity to Europe by his influence than to foment its troubles by his ambition. He firmly persisted in a system of neutrality, which he pursued from prudence, but which his predecessor had adopted only from inconstancy.

No sooner had Buonaparte invested himself with the consular government of France than he paid the most assiduous court to the Prussian

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